AIMS IN MOTION

dance companies and their education programmes

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THE
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study

With the overall intention of encouraging good practice through a clarification of the aims and activities of dance companies' education work, the research addressed four key objectives:

- to analyse the aims and purposes of education work in dance companies;
- to examine how these aims are translated into practice;
- to investigate both the relationship between the education work and the dance companies' overall artistic mission, and the way in which a dance company's identity relates to its education policy; and
- to use the results of the research to inform developments in the policy and practice of dance company education activity, and to develop the policy of funding bodies to better suit the needs of companies and artists.

The study did not attempt to evaluate, assess or appraise the companies' educational activities. Its purpose was to understand the intentions behind a sample of dance education work – not to judge the quality of the work or the outcomes for participants.

The dance companies

Initially, 43 companies were selected by the Arts Council of England (ACE) using the following criteria: they were dance companies rather than dance development agencies; their main purpose was to make and tour work nationally; they were funded by ACE or by Regional Arts Boards (RABs). A random sample of 20 dance companies was selected from this list of 43; the 20 included companies that were in receipt of project, fixed-term or revenue funding. From this random sample, ten were chosen to reflect the range of types of dance company taking account of the following variables: form specialism, cultural diversity, disability, size and structure, number of dancers and contract weeks, type of funding category, those which were building based, and those which were regionally located. Quality of educational provision was not considered as a criterion for selection.

Between June and September 2000, visits of between one and three days were made to the ten dance companies in the sample, and a wide range of personnel was interviewed. Altogether, 51 interviews were completed – 46 in person and five on the telephone.

While analysis of staffing, structure and location of education revealed that emerging differences were related mainly to company size, a company's artistic and educational momentum tended to be driven by the distinctive

approach of its artistic director. The contexts in which dance companies worked seemed less disparate; these included tours, pre-show talks, workshops, and links with dance agencies, arts centres, schools or colleges.

The aims of dance companies' education programmes

Five broad categories of education aims were identified, each with its own set of sub-categories. The five main categories were:

- integration of artistic and education aims
- client-centred education aims
- curriculum development and support
- dance-centred education aims
- education aims relating to the needs of dance companies.

The diversity of the companies in the sample, and the variety and interrelation of the aims they expressed, mean that only the broadest indication of the frequency of aims can be offered here. In some cases, a particular sub-category of aims tended to be concentrated within a single company; the insistence in each organisation on the unique character of their artistic identity was striking. The findings given below, therefore, conceal the fact that, for a small minority of companies, some aims may be completely inapplicable.

Bearing such caveats in mind, education aims relating to the needs of dance companies emerged as the most dominant group, especially aims directed towards companies' survival, with those relating to an appreciation of the company's distinctive style being notably conspicuous. Dance-centred aims, curriculum development aims, and client-centred aims relating to the community were less frequently expressed, although the number of references to these three categories appeared to be fairly similar within all the companies.

The distinctive role of dance in education

Consideration of the distinctive role of dance in education inspired a rich array of responses. Three discrete interpretations were discernible.

- A '*holistic artform*'

  TThe essential nature of dance was repeatedly defined by its demand for total involvement of mind, body and spirit. Such commitment was seen to be rewarded by a corresponding sense of physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual fulfilment.

- A cultural '*ambassador*'

  Interviewees from culturally specific companies emphasised the importance of dance in the communication of a culture. At times, such communication of culture seemed to be as, or more, important than the artform itself.

- *'Corporation'* and *'cooperation'*

  As a *'non-verbal'* artform, the collective physical and mental concentration required for dancing with others was widely believed to be a potent resource for developing cooperation and collaboration.

Conviction of the holistic quality of dance pervaded the responses, and would seem to suggest that, for most individuals, personal development was an implicit priority for education work.

Influences on education aims

The role of the chief executive was seen as crucial for a coherent and committed approach to education, while the role of the Board appeared to vary considerably from one company to another. The smaller the organisation, the more effective the communication of education aims throughout the company appeared to be.

A number of interviewees recommended the invigorating effect of partnerships. Those working with schools often assigned considerable importance to links with the National Curriculum. The Government's emphasis on lifelong learning was upheld as an incentive to work with a wider age group. Other influences related to companies' individual circumstances, their range of contacts and the professional concerns of the artistic director.

All companies acknowledged the influence of funding on education aims. Numerous interviewees advocated long-term funding as a crucial component of any education work which aimed to achieve a lasting impact on participants.

In terms of developing their education work, the majority of companies seemed to be at a turning point. While recognising the increasing opportunities to combine artistic intentions with education programmes, they were keenly aware of their immediate priorities as professional artists. At such a transitional stage, it seemed the urgency of developing appreciative audiences for a company's distinctive style could impel the momentum for education as energetically as the desire to open access to the artform *per se*.

Translating aims into practice

While this perceived phase of transition encouraged some organisations to be more proactive and, thus, perhaps more focused in their approach, others frequently appeared to prefer to retain the right to respond to intriguing demands which might be artistically rewarding.

Partnerships

Creating effective partnerships was seen as crucial to an education programme's success. Apart from individual schools, regional dance

agencies and other development organisations were respected for their knowledge of the field. Funding partnerships were seen by some companies to have a positive effect on creative planning.

Responsibilities for education work

Education officers played a crucial role in developing and sustaining a company's education work. However, these officers frequently felt that appreciation of their work by senior management was not always translated into the provision of resources, or recognised by the status accorded to them within the organisation.

Dancers and animateurs tended to be involved in the studio rather than at the planning stage of education work. The dancer's role was highly valued, and seen as a vital component of programmes where their very identity addressed such issues as gender, physical disability, or the promotion of a specific culture. Consequently, some animateurs felt themselves to be undervalued, and perceived as 'second-best' by project participants.

Target groups

While in theory targeting only certain groups, it was clear that all the companies but one worked with a wide range of age groups in a variety of contexts.

Although a great deal of work took place in schools, companies acknowledged that they had an inadequate understanding of new education initiatives, and expressed a need for guidance in terms of how best to serve teachers. Lifelong learning was also cited as an area where companies needed to increase their understanding of educational opportunities.

Evaluation and staff development needs

All the dance companies were committed to evaluating their education work. However, it emerged that they would welcome more external evaluation, in the belief that it might lead to improvement in practice.

Training needs ranged from a deeper understanding of the sociological and political contexts of their education work to specific requirements, for example in behaviour management, or in the application of new technologies. The need for continuous professional development relating to education work recurred throughout the interviews.

Relating aims for education work to everyday practice

When the companies' stated education aims were applied to the profiles of their actual projects, the most frequently occurring aims related to the companies' own survival. Interviewees cited the following in explanation: a history of chronic underfunding; the volatility of the sector; and the difficulties of developing and sustaining audiences, while remaining artistically at the cutting edge.

Education programmes and core artistic activity

Individual interpretations of the concepts 'education' and 'core activity' varied considerably, depending on personal experience of education and dance. Most interviewees agreed, however, that dance was universally beneficial. Although the majority of respondents thought integration desirable, in practice congruence between artistic and education aims appeared to vary. Integration seemed more likely to occur in smaller companies which combined shared understanding of the education policy with close communication within the organisation.

Companies valued the impact of education work on core artistic activity: first, for reminding dancers what was intrinsically important about the artform; second, for keeping them grounded in what was at times perceived to be a somewhat artificial environment; and third, for the beneficial effect of education activities on career development.

Poised for change

At the time that this research took place (2000), many interviewees believed that the artform was changing rapidly, together with the range of 'appropriate' venues, and the very concepts of 'audience' and 'performance'. It seemed, indeed, as if dance companies were increasingly perceiving themselves as a resource for education in its broadest sense.

It is worth remembering, however, that the overriding aim to emerge from the research was that of ensuring the survival of the artform through the survival of dance companies themselves. Some key questions need to be addressed. Why did dance companies feel insecure? Does the overriding need to survive inhibit their capacity to thrive in educational terms?

Could this somewhat introspective approach suggest a perception in the dance world at the time of the research that dance was less valued than other artforms, and that it needed to assert its validity *per se* among the population at large? Although its physicality and emotional force may make an initial impact, the more esoteric aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of dance may be harder for participants and audiences to grasp, unless the experience of participation, as dancer or spectator, is sustained and supported through education programmes over a period of time. Several interviewees registered dissatisfaction with a perceived alienation of many dance companies from prospective audiences in recent years, through concentration on a less accessible '*experimental*' or '*elitist*' repertoire. Yet at the same time, a belief in the power of dance to release individual potential pervaded the responses, and often appeared to be the driving force behind commitment to education.

For dance companies' education programmes to flourish and develop, a wider celebration of dance as an artform in its own right, and corresponding recognition of its distinctive educational potential by specialists in education, may be needed to dispel companies' anxieties about compromising artistic integrity. At the same time, increased emphasis on professional security, and professional development for individual dancers, might give dance companies more wholehearted enthusiasm for the personal and artistic challenges inherent in educational activities.

1. THE STUDY

1.1 Background to the research

Since the early 1980s, an extensive range of education programmes has been developed by dance companies and artists. In part, this has been inspired by the growing expectation that publicly funded arts organisations should provide education programmes as part of, or alongside, their artistic activities. There has also been a substantial growth in the demand and opportunities for dance education work, as the value of dance has gained broader recognition both in education contexts, and from its providers and funding bodies.

In the current climate of evaluation and accountability that prevails in many areas of education and commerce, many working within dance education have become increasingly aware of questions relating to the aims and purposes of the work which they provide. Furthermore, it is arguable that the proliferation of opportunities and the widening agenda emerging for dance companies may raise uncertainty amongst some professional dance practitioners as to the key aspirations and intended outcomes of dance education. Accordingly, fundamental questions are raised about the particular contributions that dance companies can make to educational contexts, the social and educational agendas to which they could or should be working, and the extent to which there is a consensus across the dance company practitioners as to the key aims and purposes of their education work.

While new opportunities have emerged from both new funding and thinking opportunities such as the 'New Audiences Development Fund' and Stabilisation programmes, as well as recent Government interest in the potential of the arts to contribute to problems such as social exclusion and participation in lifelong learning, other areas have been less supported. Concerns that few dancers receive training in the specific skills needed to lead education and community work have been raised in Birch *et al.* (1998). Similarly, Clarke and Gibson (1998) have underlined the need for continuing professional development for dancers in order to provide different approaches to support and training throughout their career. In the formal education sector, many believe that the introduction of local management of schools and the National Curriculum have led to a diminution of dance activity in schools. LEA advisory structures have been largely dismantled, with many schools now expected to take individual responsibility for developing arts subjects.

For many dance companies, responding to a wider agenda has meant forging new partnerships, and working collaboratively with other organisations and

arts practitioners. Often with little support or advice in this new way of working, many companies are making the best they can of the new funding and development opportunities available, but for some this road is difficult. However, many companies have invested considerable time in fundraising and development, in order to create diverse and exciting opportunities for dance and dance education.

Against this backcloth, this research into dance education programmes seems timely and apposite.

1.2 Aims of the research

With the overall aim of encouraging good practice through a clarification of the aims and activities of dance company education work, the research addressed four key objectives:

- to analyse the aims and purposes of education work in dance companies;
- to examine how these aims are translated into practice;
- to investigate the relationship between the education work and the overall artistic mission of the dance companies and how the identity of a dance company relates to their education policy; and
- to use the results of the research to inform developments in the policy and practice of dance company education activity and to develop the policy of funding bodies to better suit the needs of companies and artists.

Throughout the study, a definition of 'education' has been taken as education in the broadest sense – both within and out of school, for any or all age groups, and being about any aspect of dance, culture, or personal and social developments.

Significantly, the research did not attempt to evaluate, assess or appraise educational activities provided by dance companies. The purpose of the study was to understand the intentions behind a sample of dance education work – not to judge its quality or outcomes for participants.

1.3 Methods

Initially, 43 companies were selected by the Arts Council of England (ACE) using the following criteria: they were dance companies rather than dance development agencies; their main purpose was to make and tour work nationally; they were funded by ACE or by Regional Arts Boards (RABs). A random sample of 20 dance companies was selected from this list of 43; the 20 included companies that were in receipt of project, fixed-term or revenue funding. From this random sample, ten were chosen to reflect the range of types of dance company taking account of the following variables: form specialism, cultural diversity, disability, size and structure, number of dancers and contract weeks, type of funding

category, those which were building based, and those which were regionally located. Quality of educational provision was not considered as a criterion for selection. For organisational and availability reasons, two were unable to contribute to the study. These were replaced by companies of a similar size, type and style.

Prior to the case study visits, a range of documentation was collected including artistic and education policies, a list of recent education programmes, lists of core staff, Board members and advisory groups, and financial information and business plans.

Between June and October 2000, researchers spent from one to three days interviewing a range of personnel from each dance company in the sample. In total, 51 interviews were completed – 46 in person and five on the telephone. Table 1.1 summarises the numbers of interviewees.

Table 1.1 Summary of interviewees

Interviewees	In person	By telephone
Board members	4	2
Chief executives, administrative directors, general managers	6	1
Artistic directors	6	1
Heads of education, education officers	7	–
Dancers (including freelance dancers)	16	1
Others: Including a development director, a musician, a company animateur, a community education worker, a freelance choreographer, an administrator and a freelance artist.	7	–
Total	46	5

Source: *NFER, Dance company and artists' education programmes*

Three of the companies' artistic directors were unavailable for interview, as were two administrative directors (another company employed a development director in this role instead). It was often difficult to distinguish between those freelance dancers who very much belonged to a company, and those who were more permanent company dancers, and hence these have been combined to total the 17 dancers interviewed. On the other hand, some freelancers worked separately from the core of the company, and these roles are included under 'other'.

All interviews were allowed approximately an hour, although additional questions were asked of administrative and artistic directors, bringing those interviews up to two hours (in practice, slightly shorter for telephone interviews, although the same schedules were used). All in-person interviews were recorded, and then transcribed or summarised prior to analysis. Notes were made during the telephone interviews, for summary prior to analysis. The interviewees were afforded confidentiality and anonymity, and hence none of the dance companies are named in the report.

1.4 Summary of the sample of dance companies

The ten dance companies forming the sample for the study represented a wide variety of dance styles and repertoires, and captured an array of approaches relating to dance and dance education.

This section describes the spectrum of different contexts and organisational structures covered by the ten companies in the sample and considers the place of education within those structures. It also looks briefly at the range and extent of the companies' education programmes, and some of their distinctive characteristics.

1.4.1 Size, staffing and administrative organisation

Eight of the companies involved in the study were small- to medium-scale, with two larger-scale companies making up the full sample of ten. They ranged in size from having just one, to over 50, dancers, and consisted of the following staffing:

- two large-scale, city-based dance companies each with over 25 dancers, and between 15 and 20 posts covering administration, education, marketing and development;
- three medium-scale, companies with approximately eight dancers 'on contract', with posts for four core staff in the areas of company administration, artistic direction, education and marketing;
- two further medium-scale companies employing up to 12 dancers, with a core of five or six involved in education work, and just one or two administrative posts; and
- three small-scale companies where the artistic director was the key deliverer of the work, with just one or two other posts.

Further to the posts outlined above, the two largest companies and several of the medium-scale companies had their own technical support teams. In addition, the two largest companies had at least two full-time music posts.

The ratio of administrative staff to dancers was in general 1:2 for the larger companies, but as companies got smaller this ratio reduced, usually because there were fewer marketing, development and education posts. Moreover, administrative posts in the smaller companies were less likely to have such distinct roles. In particular, there were no discrete finance posts in the medium- and small-scale companies. The effect of this on financial welfare and capability for securing funding was not discussed by the interviewees, except to say that company administrators in the small- and medium-sized companies found it time consuming to deal with funding applications, as well as the day-to-day administration of the office.

The employment patterns of the companies varied in terms of dance personnel. Most were not static in this respect. One company employed dance staff on a rolling basis, while several others had recently taken on a

number of new additional dancers. For other companies, however, the core of dancers had not changed much in years. Several companies had also had changes in personnel, especially near the top, in recent months. The engagement patterns of dancers also varied. Several worked on an entirely freelance basis, while others had access to a pool of freelancers, generally to facilitate education work. Access to freelancers to boost artistic capacity was neither within the resources, nor indeed the aims, of the majority of the companies.

1.4.2 Type of organisation: artistic context

Although some companies were established in the heritage and tradition of classical dance and ballet, all of them described themselves in one way or another as contemporary dance companies: they were all involved in creating new choreographic work. Collectively, they covered a variety of dance styles and repertoires, ranging from the classical narrative repertoires of *Swan Lake* to contemporary abstract imagery. One company had a specific remit to work with dancers with disabilities, and another with media technologies. Three of the companies worked within a particular cultural style and background, each uniquely fusing their traditional dance style with other contemporary forms: one with other artforms such as story-telling, one with contemporary British dance, and one with its own contemporary cultural forms. The phrase 'contemporary ballet' as distinct from contemporary dance was used by one company, while another company's work with narrative communication attracted ballet, as well as contemporary dance, audiences.

More conspicuous than the range of dance forms, however, was the variety of approach to dance and dance education – more often than not driven by the individual personality of the company's artistic director. Such drive contributed to some of the distinctive characteristics of each company, especially in the area of new choreography. These characteristics are illustrated further in Chapter 3.

In contrast, the structural contexts in which companies worked, both educationally and artistically, seemed to be neither so disparate nor so unique to each company – there is, perhaps, a consistent feature of the dance world in which they all work. Tours, pre-show talks, workshops, and links with dance agencies, arts centres, and schools or colleges were all mentioned, to some extent, across the board. Several companies pushed the boundaries of these contexts artistically (for example, to find new performance spaces for their work), but overall, companies worked within the confines of existing performance and educational venues, as well as the structural and funding context of the dance world. It was only one company that talked about framing the context (rather than the content) of its work within certain parameters, such as geographical location or audience size. Such limitations were viewed positively, and helped to focus their work. This may be an area for other companies to explore.

1.4.3 Environmental location and context

All ten dance companies were located mainly in urban areas. One of the companies operated on a split-site, while another had four geographical bases. For both of these companies, although face-to-face meetings between the artistic director and the company administrator were less frequent than they would perhaps like, the physical distance between them was deemed by the interviewees not to impact on the quality or facilitation of their work.

Not all the companies had permanent 'homes' or rehearsal spaces. While some operated in specific city centre sites, others made use of space 'in kind' at universities or dance schools, or by hiring dance agency venues. All the companies professed a degree of touring, to a greater or lesser extent, mostly to small- and middle-scale venues throughout the UK. International touring was a high priority for three of the companies.

Performance venues also varied between the companies, and ranged from the small theatre to the wide open air. One company in particular sought to take advantage of architectural space in performance, creating installation pieces for a number of clients. Only the two larger companies had 'home' performance venues. Having no home venue was seen by one company as a particular problem, not only for audience development, but for retaining the audience that they already had:

> *... for me, the big issue about audience development is how to attract your core audience and keep them coming ... it's about sustaining your core audience – how do you sustain it and make them come every time? I think the audience development issues are different for venues than they are for* [touring] *companies* (company administrator).

Building up links with performance venues was important to several of the companies. In the process of expansion and moving up to middle-scale venues, one was planning on maintaining its links with small-scale venues through future education projects. Not all companies had the opportunity to perform where they wanted to, and found some venues to be inappropriate to their work. In particular, one company pointed out the cultural disparity between being a city-based company and being expected by funders to perform primarily in rural venues. The artistic director expressed an increasing tension in asking city-based dancers to perform in non-metropolitan, and thus, to them, non-cosmopolitan, venues.

1.4.4 Social context: links with the community

Where links with the local community did exist, they were distinctive and specific to the companies that professed them. One company had particularly well-established educational links with local schools; another, with a local sports venue. Evening classes provided community links for two of the companies. One company worked within the same cultural experiences and background of the community in which it was based, and ran an

extensive programme of community dance groups and classes. Concentrating their work in local communities had positive and negative impacts for two of the companies. On the plus side, accessibility to the company's work was enhanced through the audiences and participants being already familiar with the culture of the dance form. On the minus side, companies felt less able to branch out to new geographical areas, and therefore lost the associated benefits for artistic, professional and financial developments.

With a more identifiable community to serve than if they had been in a larger city, one company felt particular connections with the city in which it was located: *'people who live here feel it is their company'*. Because of its city venue, community access was deemed easier.

Only one company mentioned a project that strengthened community links through a Millennium-funded scheme. Surprisingly, this was the only project that specifically mentioned Millennium moneys.

Not all the companies had links with their local communities – some because of the strong touring element of their work, others because of the presence of one or more dance companies similarly located, and with local community links already established. Interestingly, whether or not the local community could access a company's work was not a strong issue for companies more involved in touring, one artistic director saying they preferred not to be '[X location]-*centric*'. For one company, undertaking any kind of community work was considered inappropriate, because of both the technical demands their shows placed on performance venues, and the complex nature of the content of their shows.

1.4.5 Management structures and company approach to education

Management structures appeared to fall into three categories. The first, and most common, was for the artistic director to have overall responsibility and directorship of the company, supported by administrative personnel (sometimes acting as the company executive), and with direct line management to the education work. Exact levels of seniority varied with each company. In practice, some worked as a hub or a wheel, others as a pyramid of hierarchical management. The second category encompassed three of the small- to medium-scale companies, whose structure depended on an artistic director working in parallel with an administrator or development officer, with either a core of dancers and teachers, or possible freelance collaborators. The final category encompassed the larger companies who tended to work on a twofold structure, with company management shared between the artistic director and the chief executive. These management posts were functionally distinct, and in contrast with the medium and smaller companies, line management of the education work was cited with the chief executive. Almost always, education staff wanted to be closer to the artistic management of the company in this case.

These management types, then, were generally correlated with company size. What was not correlated with size, though (either negatively or positively), was the exact line management and thus, implied status, of education within the company. Further details on the status of education within the companies are given in Chapter 4.

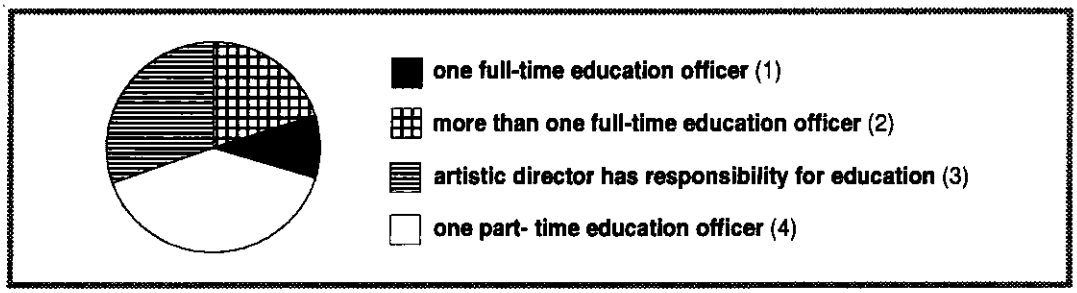
All the companies had a Board of Directors to oversee the development of the company. Some had only recently been constituted. Direct contact with the Board was through the artistic director and company or chief executive. Apart from the artistic director, however, there was little or no formal dance representative to the Board. However, many interviewees highlighted the possibilities for informal advice and support from the Board: many education officers felt particularly supported in this respect, with several Boards' membership including an education specialist.

1.4.6 The location and role of education within the company

The location of education within the structure of each company varied. One company functioned as a separate education company, running in parallel with its sister dance performance company. Another ran an education unit, with its own discrete 'identity' and financial responsibilities, although it was not separate from the rest of the company. This location of education work was felt by the management to help clarify its goals, and to ensure that it did not get swamped by the artistic work of the company. Two had large education departments. Despite similar locations, however, the role of education in each of these companies was quite different. For one, the education work was highly delineated towards tour support, while at the other, a recent emphasis on closer integration of artistic and educational ideas meant that education programmes would reflect more closely the artistic vision of the company.

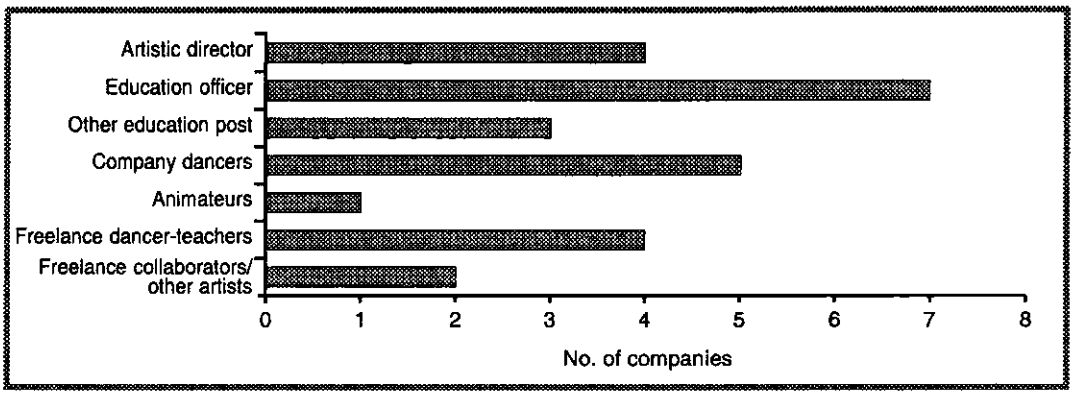
Of more significance than the location of education, then, was its role within the company. Indeed, the extent of integration of education work within the company depended more significantly on the role of education in relation to the artistic work and the support it received from the artistic director than it did on the organisational location of education. One company, for example, had no education officer, but did almost all education work, because of the stance the artistic director took. For another company, education work was so integrated within the company that it was difficult for the interviewees to think of it as in any way separate from their artistic programme. The variation in the distribution of responsibility for education is shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Management of education programmes (by number of companies)



The number of key players involved in the provision of education work ranged from just one to around 12 members of staff. Interestingly, the education officer was not always a dancer, and in such cases, undertook an administrative, facilitative role. Even where the education officer was a dancer, very rarely did they lead the physical aspects of an education programme, preferring to share this responsibility with other dancers. Figure 1.2 shows who the key facilitators of the education programmes were. While this chart does not consider the actual combinations of staff involved in education delivery, it indicates the range and frequencies of types of staff involved.

Figure 1.2 Key facilitators of education programmes



Engagement of company dancers in education work depended on company policy, and the sample was divided fairly evenly between those who expected all their dancers to be involved to some extent, and those who had a designated core of dancers for their education work. One company had its own core of animateurs, while another found that it was the more experienced dancers, close to artistic retirement, who led the education work. Several companies, including the two largest, had access to a pool of freelance dancers outside their core staff, to facilitate education work. In contrast, two companies never engaged dancers from outside of their core in education and teaching work, for purposes of company identity and tightness.

1.4.7 The extent of the education work

There was a great variety of education work across the sample, ranging from projects with nursery school children, to those involving dance degree students, to those spanning the generations and involving old and young together. Some projects were community based, some were school based, and others venue or performance specific. The kinds of activities reported included workshops and classes on movement and body awareness, as well as sessions to prepare for performances alongside the companies' artistic programme. Some companies included sessions that were not 'dancing' but looked at the cultural and social backgrounds of its particular dance form. Some included teacher-support packs, or community-dance videos in their education work, and three made particular contributions to the A-level and GCSE dance syllabus.

The emphasis on education work varied from company to company: two undertook almost all education work (one of these being the separate education company, the other in the process of becoming one). Another always had an education programme running alongside its artistic productions, and was heavily involved in teaching activity throughout the year. In contrast, another company in the sample chose to do very little in the way of education work because of the complex nature of its artistic work. The extent of education work undertaken did not relate to company size.

Some companies had distinct priorities for their education work, reflected in their work with specific target groups. This was often related to their artistic mission. In contrast, others placed less emphasis on a target group, but instead undertook a variety of education work depending on their artistic programme, and to some extent on funding.

1.4.8 Funding

About half of the companies in the sample received some fixed-term funding from the ACE, while others were funded on a project-by-project basis. Fixed-term funding appeared mainly to go towards a company's artistic work, although a few companies assigned these moneys to various functions, including education, from a central pot. Most had separate budgets for education and artistic work, each with their own fundraising strategies. Table 1.2 shows the main sources of income for the companies.

Table 1.2 Sources of funding

All companies	Some companies – artistic funding	Some companies – education funding
• Arts Council	• Earned income (box office)	• Earned income (teaching and education programmes)
• Regional Arts Board	• Earned income (international touring)	• Income in kind (from schools, universities)
• Local Borough Councils	• Earned income (commercial work)	• Lottery grants
• City Councils		• Charitable trusts

Source: *NFER, Dance company and artists' education programmes*

In addition, one company had its own foundation and membership group from which membership fees and donations fed into the education budget.

Concerns regarding funding included:

- not enough support from local councils for those companies undertaking regionally specific work, in particular regarding community work with young people;
- high performance costs – even though companies often lowered ticket prices for participants involved in their education programmes to attend a performance, costs were still felt to be high for children and young people – especially where a whole school or class might be expected to attend as a premise of participation in the programme;
- the 'artistic-education' funding paradox – some companies felt that the money they received reflected the sponsors' agenda and did not always reflect what they wanted to do (for example, one company doing a lot of education work found it very difficult to get funding for artistic activity); and
- timescales and planning – almost all those involved in fundraising mentioned that it was a time-consuming process, and that decisions on whether or not they would get the funding were often so tight to the line that it made project planning quite difficult.

Interestingly, for some companies, education work was seen as a financially viable activity, actually boosting their financial capacity. Others, however, found that funding for education projects often got soaked up by the company as a whole, or felt that it was not enough.

1.4.9 Training for education

Nine out of the ten companies sought to undertake training, although only two of the companies had a specific budget for this. Seven individuals were undertaking, or had recently undertaken, training for their own professional development, including arts MA and administration degree courses. Of these, some were supported in part by company funding (including one from an Arts for Everyone (A4E) grant), some by time off in kind, and some were not financially supported. In-house education training for dancers 'on the job' was mentioned by five companies, for example by working in pairs or teams, or by observing workshops. Although *ad hoc, t*wo companies had induction programmes for new dancers, and another company ran a summer school at which new dancer-teachers could attend and train. Interviewees from four different companies mentioned how one's own experience of teaching and training others, for example on A-level syllabus courses, was in itself a form of professional development.

Interviewees from six companies would have liked more training to be available, one saying that she would like to know what was available for the professional development of education officers. In addition to educational training for dancers, one education officer expressed that she would like more time with the dancers in her company to talk about the purposes of education, and how workshops and so on were run.

Two companies had considered the possibilities for accreditation of their dancer-teachers, but neither had pursued this further at this stage. One company had recently set up an MA course for the professional development of its own dancers.

1.4.10 Advisory support

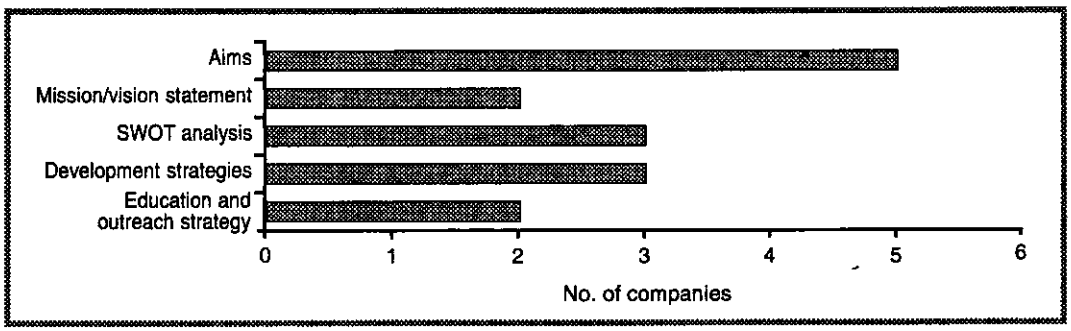
A minority of interviewees mentioned advisory support from the following limited number of sources: education specialists (if any) on the Board of Directors; dance agencies; a local group of administrators (specific to one company); a dance officers' group which acted as a support network for education officers, offering training on negotiation and presentation skills (mentioned by one company); an education advisory committee (again, specific to one company).

1.4.11 Education policies

Eight of the companies had written education policies. Of the two that did not, one had no written policies at all – just a short statement of what they did – and the other was a newly formed company and expected a policy to be written in the near future.

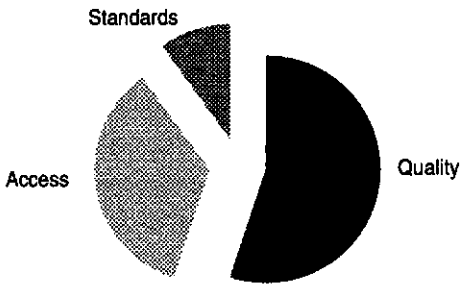
Figure 1.3 indicates the frequencies of the types of education policy held by the companies in the sample, while Figure 1.4 considers the language used and its relationship to artistic policies. Education documents/leaflets from seven companies were collected. Taking into account that both interview data and written documents have been used in this analysis, as well as the fact that written documents may be developed, quantitative data given here is only a guide to the range and flavour of the samples' policies.

Figure 1.3 Education policy type



As shown in Figure 1.3, five companies expressed their education policies as aims, while two set them out as a mission or vision statement. Three companies had undertaken a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) analysis based on their artistic and education work. Within these policies, two main categories of terminology were used – 'quality' and 'access'. A third, 'standards', was used in a few policies (see Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4 Terms used in education policies



- Quality and, less often, standards in education policies often reflected the same high quality artistic mission – '*excellence of finished product*', '*to support the high-quality artistic product*'.
- Access was indicated by terms such as '*inclusivity*', '*opportunities for young men*', '*to create, present and enable access*', and '*equal opportunities*' (mentioned less frequently).

The educational aims indicated in the policy documents included the following, in approximate order of frequency of mentions:

- connections with the artistic aims (usually visionary)
- supporting the artistic work (more concrete aims)
- aims about the particular dance form
- aims relating to clients/target groups
- aims regarding collaboration and development of partnerships
- learning opportunities
- aims to provide training (for professional development of both company dancers and young people training or wanting to train as dancers)
- cross-arts work
- fundraising
- aims relating to Government policy/National Curriculum
- evaluation.

The availability of funding was not deemed by any of the interviewees to influence education policy, but rather the extent to which companies could take their education projects, and what they could or could not actually do. Evaluation was rarely mentioned alongside education policies: certainly evaluation was not given a high profile by any in the sample. One reason for this may perhaps be that, while a funding body often had a stake in an education project, this seemed less apparent in terms of outcomes – interviewees did not talk about funding bodies requiring certain outcomes or targets.

1.4.12 Consultation and negotiation with client groups/ collaborators

There was a range of different emphases on consultation and negotiation strategies with clients and collaborators across the sample. For one company, the purpose of consultation was to inform and develop their education work, and this was an organic process, with the clients affecting the aims and work long-term. For another, consultation was more immediate, in order to develop a specific project. There was an initial 'planning meeting' with clients for each project, mainly in order to be as flexible as possible to client need, but also to ensure that the client was aware of the aims and intentions of the artists involved.

Whether a company's education work was reactive or proactive, or both, yielded a somewhat confused set of responses, with discrepancies between interviewees from the same company, as well as across the sample. More appropriate to the interviewees' responses about consultation strategies was to what extent they felt their education work to be adaptable to client need. For some, this happened *in situ* – for example, by adapting their teaching approach to the mood of the participants in order to '*connect*' on a social, friendly level, or even to '*take advice and listen to the needs of young people*'. Others talked about adapting the actual dance movements to suit client need. For one dancer, it was this 'ability to adapt' that had struck him most in all the education work he had so far been involved with, in particular in his work with people with disabilities: '*There was a blind woman who could only move her little finger ... but if I say "Move your right leg" and you can't move your right leg, then move your right finger. So, it was about adapting.*'

Dance agency and Regional Arts Board (RAB) partnerships, local to the particular project venue, were deemed helpful by two education officers '*because they've got the local knowledge of the field*', and they could facilitate the project by finding local collaborators and participants.

Collaboration with other artists was undertaken by several of the smaller companies. A significant number of interviewees in senior management posts questioned the purposes of collaboration within formal education (in particular from key stages 2 to 4), in dance education programmes. While some regarded such provision as vital to their education programmes, others felt it was outside their company remit.

1.4.13 Dance company development

All companies, bar one, in the sample expressed the need for the professional development of their dancers in one way or another. As we have seen, some had specific development strategies in place, either in policy documents, or through necessity because of recent expansion or changes in personnel near the top of the company. The development of longer-term relationships with venues seemed central to many of the companies' current

needs. A minority felt in need of financial development and support, finding present circumstances extremely difficult to survive in. Finally, the development of audiences was a concern for most companies, and almost all expressed the importance of finding a balance '*that suited them*', of pushing for new audiences through marketing of artistic and education work alike, and of creating new artistic and education programmes for the benefit of dance itself.

1.5 Structure of the report

Having introduced the contexts in which the companies operated, in the next three chapters we will take a much more detailed look at their education programmes, and give a flavour of some of the work that is done in this area. These chapters are structured as follows:

Chapter 2: considers the aims of the dance companies' education programmes;

Chapter 3: considers the design and implementation of some of these education programmes with examples;

Chapter 4: explores the relationship between the company's artistic and educational aims; and

Chapter 5: offers a summary and conclusion.

2. THE AIMS OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

2.1 Introduction

All interviewees were asked to describe the aims and objectives of their company's education programmes. They were asked whether such aims had changed or developed in any way, and what had influenced any changes. They were also asked whether they believed all dance companies should provide education programmes, and to identify what they regarded as the distinctive contribution of dance to education in its broadest sense.

Individual interpretations of 'education' varied considerably, and this directly affected the way that education aims were conceived. Experiences of education work, from the participants' point of view, were notably diverse; as one education officer pointed out: '*it means different things to different people depending what they've actually accessed*'. Some company members perceived education in strictly formal terms, as something referring to work with schools, often specifically related to the school curriculum. Others, while extending their definition of education to include activity outside the school context, limited their view of education in a different way, to self-contained events such as '*pre-show and post-show talks*' closely related to the current repertoire. Education could also be interpreted as a much broader concept, relating to lifelong learning and developing the company as a community resource. In some cases, dance companies appeared to be undertaking education through a belief in its importance for its own sake, in the sense of making people think and challenging preconceptions, not only of dance but of issues of relevance to everyday life.

One interviewee, who was not a dancer, observed that an education policy was awkward to define in an arts context, and suggested that '*cultural policy*' would be more appropriate:

> *... I think for a lot of companies the problem is with the word 'education'. It's a real turn-off. It has connotations of civic duty and Wednesday afternoon workshops with primary school ...*

He felt that such associations were often uncongenial to creative artists who are driven by the inspiration of the artform itself. His views were reinforced by the comments of an experienced education worker who was also a dancer, who believed a wider cultural context was more stimulating for dance than the specific culture of formal education:

> *That natural artistic creativity ... sometimes it gets stopped when you go to an institute ... education can just be institutional ...* [or it can be] *a sense of experience ... culture and social environment as well as ... education.*

He felt that in his company, it was being receptive to '*new influences and new experiences*' in the '*cultural and social environment*' that had 'kept the company kind of like developing'.

In addition to being affected by conflicting views of education, education aims were also influenced by current debate about the nature of the artform itself. One artistic director drew a distinction between views of dance as an abstract physical activity, and the view of dance as a '*language*', which by definition, in his view, has to have a meaning. A company's interpretation of the nature of dance was thus seen to impact directly on their education work:

> *In order to teach a language like dance, it is only a language if it's about something, if it's a metaphor for something – you can't just teach it as an activity ... What I feel you have to focus on, it's just as much seeing, understanding and appreciating, as the activity. I think too much education in dance has been just the doing.*

Significantly, he also pointed out that approaching dance as a language widens its appeal beyond the few who can enjoy the physical activity for its own sake. Perceptions of the nature of dance will be considered further in reference to specific education aims.

The preceding discussion has attempted to portray the inherent complexity of the data by outlining the variety of interpretations of fundamental concepts. As illustrated in the previous chapter, the companies themselves displayed considerable diversity, which emerged in their perceptions of particular education aims, the respective emphasis ascribed to these aims and the degree to which they were interrelated. This diversity of approach is clearly demonstrated by the range of education aims which emerged from the analysis.

2.2 A typology of aims

Education aims ranged from those which represented a total integration of education with artistic aims, through client-centred aims to those where education aims were subordinate to the company's artistic mission. In several cases, education policy was undergoing radical review, with the overall intention of increasing educational activities.

From the myriad individual aims identified in the data, five broad categories gradually became discernible. It will be seen from the ensuing analysis that the typology does not place these categories in any hierarchical sequence. However, as the discussion points out, if each broad category is taken as a whole, aims listed under 'aims relating to the needs of dance companies' (type E), followed by aims related to developing the capacity for critical appreciation of dance (D9), were undeniably the most frequently cited.

A. Integration of artistic and education aims

B. Client-centred education aims (proactive)

1. ***Aims related to personal development (especially for young people)***
   a. to enrich people's lives and provide enjoyment
   b. to engage the emotions and imagination
      i) to explore 'difficult' areas of experience
      ii) to open alternative perspectives/challenge the status quo
   c. to offer opportunities for self-expression, in order to develop self-confidence and self-esteem
   d. to develop awareness of inner self (spiritual awareness?)
   e. to offer opportunities for social interaction and teamwork

2. ***Aims relating to the community***
   a. to be a resource to the wider community
   b. to recognise and explore social issues:
      i) cultural diversity
      ii) social inclusion
      iii) lifelong learning
   c. to be a resource to a specific geographic community
   d. to be a resource to a specific target group

B. Client-centred education aims (reactive)

3. ***Education aims tailored to constituents' needs***
   a. responding to needs of a specific geographic community
   b. responding to young people's needs in particular
   c. responding to needs of particular target group

C. Curriculum development and support (reactive and proactive)

4. ***To support teacher education and training***
5. ***To support teachers in their teaching, opening another dimension on work in the classroom***
   a. for dance studies
   b. for other areas of the curriculum (literacy, numeracy, science, etc.)
6. ***To raise the profile of dance in schools***
7. ***Responding to school needs***

D. Dance-centred education aims

8. To develop dance skills

a. for those aiming for dance as a profession

b. for anyone interested in dance

9. To develop the capacity for critical appreciation of dance

a. to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of dance and dance styles

b. to inform and educate audiences/learners about particular pieces

c. to extend knowledge of the historical context of dance/ choreographers/composers

E. Aims relating to the needs of dance companies

10. Education aims supporting artistic aims

a. to contribute to the development of dance (choreography/ technology/'cross-arts')

b. to provide creative opportunities for choreographers

c. to commission and perform new music

d. to 'stretch' dancers (artistically/technically) by including education work in their professional development

11. Target group determined by artistic aims

12. Aims directed towards the survival of dance companies

a. audience development

i) to build audiences for and broaden access to dance performances

ii) to ensure that young people perceive dance as relevant (repertoire, venue, marketing educational approach)

iii) to ensure that dance is perceived as relevant by boys and young men

b. to develop appreciation of company's particular style/ repertoire/cultural context

c. to broaden dancers' skills/provide career opportunities for older dancers no longer involved in performance

d. to attract funding

13. Dissociation from education aims

Although most companies identified a variety of the education aims listed in the typology, in many cases these aims appeared to be interrelated. While most interviewees saw it as a priority to generate wider audiences, and to promote the understanding of dance as an artform, for many of them a

more altruistic desire to share its perceived benefits was evident in their commitment to offering educational opportunities, either to the community in general or to particular groups of individuals within it. One artistic director, for example, who acknowledged the importance of 'getting audiences into the theatre' declared his belief that everybody should have the opportunity to be involved in dance *'at whatever kind of level or experience or ability ... inclusivity is very important'*, and added that everyone was entitled to *'interfacing with the work at the highest possible level, with the best professionals'*. Another interviewee, who underlined the importance of *'putting on'* the company's distinctive *'style'*, in order to develop their reputation in a particular community, emphasised the value *per se* of bringing different age groups across the community to work together.

The companies within the sample displayed considerable diversity. Moreover, most companies referred to a variety of the aims in the typology, and individuals consciously or unconsciously interrelated them as above. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to offer more than a very broad indication of the frequency of individual aims occurring in the data. Some of the aims listed above tended to be concentrated within single companies. The insistence in each organisation on the unique character of their artistic identity was striking, and in one or two cases, a sub-category was included in the typology primarily in order to categorise the aims of a single organisation. In considering such frequencies, it is important to remember that while they represent the overall weighting of education aims in the responses, they conceal the fact that for a small minority of companies some aims may be completely inapplicable.

Bearing such caveats in mind, 'aims relating to the needs of dance companies' (type E) emerged as the most dominant group, especially aims directed towards the survival of dance companies (type E12), with those relating to an appreciation of the company's distinctive '*style*' (type E12b) being notably conspicuous. Citations of 'dance-centred aims' (primarily in order to develop a deeper understanding of dance, as in type D9a), 'curriculum aims' (type C) and 'client-centred aims' relating to the community, (type B2 and B3) appeared to be fairly evenly spread. Although, when asked about the distinctive contribution of dance at the end of the aims section in the interview, many interviewees offered eloquent interpretations of its importance to personal development (B1), this did not feature as strongly as other aims in perceptions of a company's education aims as a whole. Given interviewees' evident belief in the power of dance for personal development, perhaps its relatively lower status, according to responses in the typology, could be due to being somehow understood, or taken for granted, in references either to community aims or to aims associated with deepening the quality of dance appreciation.

The following discussion considers each type of education aim in turn, and indicates where various aims appeared to be interrelated.

A. Integration of artistic and education aims

In only one out of the ten companies could education aims be considered totally integrated with the company's artistic mission (type A). One interviewee felt this set the company apart as '*very different*' from others. He explained that education work had been '*integral*' to the company's work from the beginning. They constantly referred to their work as '*teaching*' and had never created '*a show where it's just been a show*'. The company's education mission was seen to embrace various aims identified in the typology. The company's priority was personal development (B1), mainly for a culturally specific group of young people (B2d). This involved creating work which responded to young people's needs (B3c), '*passing on*' the work they had created, and developing it and instilling appreciation and understanding of the cultural tradition and '*ethos*' from which it sprang, in order to raise self-awareness and self-esteem (B1c).

Another company, currently in the process of reorienting its aims and developing into '*an education company*', was also '*culturally specific*'. However, in this case, the aim was to promote awareness of a specific culture across all sectors of the community, through working in schools, rather than by targeting culturally specific young people. While members were totally committed to the value of dance across the curriculum for its benefits in terms of self-expression (B1c) and social skills (B1e), their educational purpose was inspired by an underlying cultural imperative '*to provide participation opportunities in an activity which is culturally specific*', rather than by a concentration on personal development through dance, as in the case of the company described above. The company's future *raison d'être* would be to offer an experience of culturally specific classical dance to children of all cultures, as a context for learning about a specific culture (E13b). The cultural experience was paramount, and dance was the medium through which it would be achieved: '*providing a cultural experience through dance, as opposed to making* [the participants] *dancers*'.

In another company, it was claimed there was '*no separation*' between the company's education and artistic work, and that education had been '*intrinsically linked*' to the development of the work over the last ten years. However, it was observed that the profile of the company's work was that of '*an international-based contemporary dance company with a priority or focus on performance*' and that it was because education always supported the work that the two were '*completely inseparable*'. Thus, in spite of their evident commitment to giving '*a massive injection of opportunity*' to as many young people as possible, the depiction of the company's artistic and educational priorities suggested a degree of ambivalence.

A fourth company had recently subjected their education aims to radical review. Senior managers and Board members were unanimous in pronouncing the outcome as a determination to steer the company towards total integration of educational and artistic purpose and, according to their revised education policy, the education programmes were to be '*brought much more closely in line with the company's artistic vision*'. Two of the

forthcoming changes were seen to be particularly significant. The first related to shifting the focus of the education work away from primary schools towards an older, wider community target group, more suited to the increasingly adult nature of the company's artistic work. The second related to involving the dancers much more directly in facilitating the education programme. If education was to be integrated with the core work, the dancers' involvement was held to be crucial in making the company's education work distinctive (E13b). While previous education programmes were believed to have been '*good*', they were seen as 'to some extent off the shelf' and '*could have happened anywhere*'. By using dancers to lead the education work, the company would be not only '*exporting*' their artistic resources in performances, but would also be deliberately '*importing expertise*' into the education department. While expressing wholehearted support for integration, all senior managers were, however, realistic about the need for sustaining and building on present audiences (E13ai). The company's artistic style, and thus its potential audience, was closely associated with the choreographic interests of the artistic director (E11a). Thus, although the company was certainly making a strong commitment to integration, their understanding of the term was very different from the approach of the company described at the opening of this section, and their education aims, as in the case of most companies, appeared to support the artistic aims and audience development.

B. Client-centred education aims (proactive)

1. ***Aims related to personal development (especially for young people)***
   a. to enrich students' lives and provide enjoyment
   b. to engage the emotions and imagination
      i) to explore 'difficult' areas of experience
      ii) to open alternative perspectives/challenge the status quo
   c. to offer opportunities for self-expression, in order to develop self-confidence and self-esteem
   d. to develop spiritual awareness
   e. to offer opportunities for social interaction and teamwork

The purpose of dance in education, according to one Board member, is '*to help people discover in themselves*' their own physical, intellectual and spiritual '*capacities ... what they have in them*'. Although personal development aims (B1) were not cited as frequently as community aims (B2 and B3), the personal 'capacities' mentioned here featured so strongly in interviewees' accounts of the benefits of dance, that at times it seemed personal development and dance were almost synonymous.

While adhering wholeheartedly to such a view, some interviewees highlighted the importance, especially initially, of enjoyment, '*fun*' and '*entertainment*' (B1a). One animator said the priority was that '*people have a good time*' in order to ensure that a first encounter with dance was '*a positive experience*'.

A number of interviewees referred specifically to the power of dance to engage the emotions and imagination to explore difficult areas of experience and to open alternative perspectives (B1b). In one company that concentrated on work with young people, the artistic director portrayed the company's education work as '*a life experience*' in itself '*but through dance ...*'. Because the work was so closely related to the participants' own culture, lifestyle and immediate preoccupations, it was an '*... experience ... that will help them in their own life experiences*'.

For another company, the emotional and psychological potential of dance was essential for extending its appeal:

> *It's fine to make people sweat, but unless you can take it a bit further and say 'It's about something – it communicates the human condition, it's about emotions', you won't catch people – you'll only catch a few on a physical level for a short time.*

He linked personal development aims with '*seeing, understanding and appreciating*' (aim D10a), in order to take people beyond the physical dimension, and expressed his impatience with '*experimental avant-garde dancing ... dancing for its own sake*'. In his view, if a company wanted to be more accessible, they had to '*meet the curiosity*' of potential audiences by showing them that dance is '*about something*', and offer them a key to critical understanding.

The highest number of personal development aims referred to self-expression (B1c). Those involved in education programmes with young people agreed that '*non-verbal*' self-expression was '*most important*' with '*that teenage age*' when:

> *... there are lots of things that are unspoken ... not acceptable to talk about ... real issues that young people feel ... dance is an incredible way of working through those issues, because you are not saying the words but you're doing it.*

One education worker chose the word '*therapeutic*' to describe the effect of '*tapping a resource*' through dance. Another member of the same company explained how the confidence gained through achieving in dance had a positive effect on other areas of people's lives: '*it's not just about their ability as dancers*'.

Many of the comments on offering opportunities for self-expression were imbued with conviction of the power of dance to put individuals in touch with an inner self, to restore an inner balance through concentration on

physical expression. The spiritual dimension of this persistent strand of aims (B1d) was vaguely articulated as '*the feel-good factor*', and was most explicit in the comment of an interviewee whose company aimed '*spiritually ... to touch people's hearts with our work*'.

Personal development aims also included opportunities for social interaction and teamwork. Several interviewees identified the acquisition of '*team-building*' skills as one of the benefits of education programmes. The artistic director of a small company involved in working with schools identified learning '*social skills*' through collaboration as part of what dance could bring '*to make life more enjoyable*':

> *... working together, children coming up with pieces of their own work and for them to see how a few bodies can make movement together.*

B. Client-centred aims (proactive) (continued)

2. ***Aims relating to the community***
   a. to be a resource to the wider community
   b. to recognise and explore social issues:
      i) cultural diversity
      ii) social inclusion
      iii) lifelong learning
   c. to be a resource for a specific geographic community
   d. to be a resource for a specific target group

While some companies professed aims which were directed towards particular sections of the community, others perceived themselves as a resource to the community in general (B2a). One education officer felt the company's priority was 'to tour and to teach as wide as possible a range of people', in order to introduce them to the cultural context of the company's work (E12b). The artistic director, perceived across the company as a dedicated and gifted teacher, reiterated this view, and added that '*without ... getting the community involved in the work*', it was impossible to '*see how they will come and see the performance*'. Thus, the company's community aim was closely related to building audiences (E12a), and to developing their appreciation of dance styles (D9a), the company's distinctive style in particular (E12b).

In some cases, community aims were associated with social concerns (B2b). Engagement with cultural diversity (B2bi) has already emerged in reference to the three companies where cultural context was an integral part of the company's individual repertoire. However, as observed earlier, these organisations differed in the extent to which they were promoting awareness of a specific culture among those who belonged to it, or across the community in general. In the interests of promoting cross-cultural activities, one company had recently been involved in an Irish and Indian dance

collaboration. A company which had its roots in culturally specific dance now incorporated elements of '*contemporary, improvisation, jazz, Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Cuban*' into its work, combining '*physical and spiritual technique ... to become one dance*'. Members of other, non-'culturally specific', companies also referred to the need to respond to the multicultural nature of contemporary society. Increasing emphasis on education in one of the larger companies had led to education work in collaboration with an Asian dance company, and this was hoped to be an area for development in the future. According to one interviewee, the education work needed '*to break down the idea that ballet is just a white middle-class activity based in Europe*' so that it became '*part of a broad programme of cultural education*'.

Social inclusion, '*inclusivity*' (B2bii), was cited more than any other 'proactive' or 'reactive' community aim. Many companies claimed the intention to extend their activities to socially disadvantaged groups. One dancer, who was uncertain of the company's education objectives, felt they should be showing that '*dance is not an elitist thing ... it's for anybody*'. Another interviewee perceived a company's current project, with '*young unemployed adults, 16–24-year-olds with very challenging backgrounds*' as a valuable first step towards working with similar groups in the future, particularly among the company's touring communities. In addition to the role of dance in celebrating the cultures of ethnic minorities, some companies valued its '*enabling*' potential for the physically disabled and those with learning difficulties. One culturally specific company frequently worked with children with special needs in schools. Another company had taken dancers into local hospitals. One of the dancers concerned commented that it made him feel uncomfortable to display his physical expertise in front of people who were physically disabled.

By contrast, another company's '*main policy*' specified that '*all work has to be integrated*' in terms of including people of all physical abilities. Their education work presented a '*united front*' in this respect, with one 'able-bodied' teacher and one disabled teacher for every project. Working with people with learning difficulties was seen as particularly challenging by some interviewees: '*Occasionally if you got some disruptive people maybe with learning difficulties ... that was not only difficult, but it diluted the experience for everyone else.*' As this speaker pointed out, the concept of inclusion can easily become '*a minefield*', because while some people with learning difficulties present no behaviour problems at all, others do. The company concerned had found it '*hard to exclude*', and '*striking a balance*' had taken a considerable amount of negotiation.

The concept of lifelong learning (B2biii) seemed implicit in many comments on inspiring and sustaining enthusiasm for dance across the community. A minority of interviewees specifically identified lifelong learning as an education aim. One artistic director described how his company would '*stay in contact*' with people:

> *... it's about ongoing learning ... we tend to revisit people, and the things that we do, we look at them again, so it's always about learning really ... basically learning and never stop learning.*

An artistic director elsewhere averred that '*art can't exist outside of society and art cannot exist just for certain sections of society*'. He identified the company's commitment to lifelong learning with the reorientation of their education work towards the wider community.

Members of the two largest organisations highlighted their relationship with their respective local communities (B2c). One administrator drew attention to the company's '*deliberate*' collaboration with local theatres, and their provision of dance classes in the surrounding area. Another interviewee referred to a company's '*allegiance*' to an '*identifiable community*', and to the '*strong links*' which had been forged with '*local government, other arts organisations ... all sorts of institutions*'. He believed the '*way forward ... for large-scale companies*' was to become '*part of the community, as a resource, and as something to be proud of*'. This proactive approach was widely recommended, in policy documents and during the interviews, as a way of combining responsibility to local constituents with ensuring a company's survival.

It is clear from the analysis so far that several companies aimed to be a resource for a highly specific target group (B2d). One company was particularly concerned to use dance to develop self-esteem, among young black people, through affirmation of the value of their own culture. Another prioritised an '*integrated approach*' in their overall intention to make dance accessible to people with various disabilities. A third aimed their education work at secondary school pupils as the repertoire was felt to be too sophisticated for a primary audience, and a fourth was in the process of 'shifting the focus' of their education programme from primary schools to the '15–50' age group, because this was perceived to be more appropriate to the adult nature of the company's recent repertoire.

B. Client-centred aims (reactive)

3. ***Education aims tailored to constituents' needs***
   a. responding to needs of a specific geographic community
   b. responding to young people's needs in particular
   c. responding to needs of a particular target group (cultural/ physical capacity etc.)

The preceding discussion of community aims has considered examples of a largely proactive approach, and as in the case of companies relating to local communities, it is evident that the relationship could be mutually beneficial. It was undoubtedly seen to be to a company's advantage, material and/or artistic, to listen to constituents. Some interviewees also identified the importance of being flexible and open minded, approaching people on equal terms, or even, as suggested here with a degree of humility, rather than as experts in a specialist field. As one artistic director explained:

> *I've never thought of participants as empty vessels that we go and fill with knowledge, and they kind of, you know, I've very much felt that it was a dialogue and that I genuinely would be learning something as well.*

In terms of a reactive approach to specific geographic communities (B3a), one interviewee accounted for a company's renewed commitment to developing education work in one of their touring communities. The most disadvantaged children in inner-city areas were held to be relatively '*steeped in the arts*' compared with culturally '*deprived*' children encountered in more remote areas, who had 'never worked with a professional artist in their lives before'.

Several interviewees drew attention to the importance of acknowledging young people's '*social scenes*' in order to sustain their enthusiasm (B3b). One experienced education worker described his company's ability '*to be adaptable to each situation*' on its own terms in their activities with young people, responding to participants' own perceptions of immediate priorities in their lives.

Companies directed towards particular target groups were keenly aware of particular requirements. A member of a company with an '*integrated*' approach to working with the disabled emphasised the crucial role of trained dancers with a disability, in understanding '*what it feels like for someone* [disabled] *who's coming to their very first dance workshop*'. She also referred to the company's development of outreach work to cater for '*... people* [who] *are not going to come out and find you*'.

C. Curriculum development and support (proactive and reactive)

4. ***to support teacher education and training***
5. ***to support teachers in their teaching, opening another dimension on work in the classroom***
   a. for dance studies
   b. for other areas of the curriculum (literacy, numeracy, science, etc.)
6. ***to raise the profile of dance in schools***
7. ***responding to school needs***

Taking the schools category (C4–C7), as a whole, the majority of responses related to supporting teachers in their teaching (C5), and to the importance of a reactive approach (C7). Some companies in the sample carried out nearly all their education work in schools, while others worked both in schools and in the wider community. The two larger ones, in particular, put

the emphasis on a proactive approach, offering schools *'an education pack'* derived from the current repertoire. Smaller companies tended to be more flexible, in working to individual schools' requirements.

In terms of supporting teacher education and training, one company anticipated this aspect of their work would need considerable development, if they were to fulfil their current aims of transferring the main thrust of their education work from schools to the wider community. Members of two other organisations referred to current INSET activities. Elsewhere, an education worker described his company's courses for teachers to promote understanding of culturally specific aspects of young people's behaviour, '*attitudes, and why they speak the way they do*', in order for them to avoid misunderstanding in everyday communication at school. He also commented on the shortage of dance specialists in schools, and how the enthusiasm for dance inspired by the company's work '*fizzles out ... because the teacher doesn't know how to take it on board*'. The company did what they could to help by offering teachers further dance training.

Opening another dimension on work in the classroom, either for dance studies or for other areas of the curriculum, was a priority for all companies involved in working with schools. One interviewee contrasted his introduction to African dance with that of the sedentary classroom routine. He said he always tries '*to visualise what children would like to do ... they like to move around, they don't like any static thing*'. A dancer elsewhere believed the company's work in schools was very valuable in terms of developing pupils' '*creative work*'. Another company had started an after-school club in addition to their school-based activities. In this case, it was the responsibility of the artistic director '*to devise, plan and deliver*', because although the company had appointed some dancers to work with her, there was no money to train them to lead workshops. In terms of training, some interviewees expressed reservations concerning work in schools; it could degenerate into '*crowd control*' unless company members felt confident in their role and had acquired the appropriate skills.

Some companies were supporting areas of the curriculum other than dance. One interviewee referred to a recent project at a local college which had involved students from a range of departments. Another explained that the company used the artform '*to provide a vocabulary that can be used to learn other things in life*', to make subjects such as science and literature '*more enjoyable*'. An artistic director with a similarly holistic approach drew attention to the '*natural*' aspect of dance, something simultaneously '*physical and mental*' and a crucial '*vehicle*' for the development of the whole person. The current relegation of dance to the outermost reaches of the PE department in many schools may seem a stark contrast to such passionate conviction of its cross-curricular potential.

Raising the profile of dance in schools was rarely mentioned as an aim *per se*. Interviewees were far more likely to speak in terms of its specific role in the classroom as above. One dancer, who thought more could be done to dispel elitist notions of dance, advocated a proactive approach in this respect:

'I think we should be getting out there, and getting into schools and showing people what we do.'

Every company working in schools referred to the importance of being responsive to schools' and teachers' needs. In some cases, this involved associating the education programme closely with the National Curriculum. One company which had evolved a new *'strategy about using the education work to develop* [their] *audience'* was now on the performing arts syllabus, rather than, as in the past, on the one for dance. They had always insisted on using dancers to lead education activities, and the education officer pointed out that the change had meant creating *'specific training and resources 'for the dancers to enable them to 'go out there and do the work'*. A Board member for another of the smaller companies who worked in schools described her advisory role in helping the artistic director, *'tying in ... with the National Curriculum'. One interviewee observed that it was more 'taxing' to work reactively with schools than to 'sell them a package'* because of the constant need to be adaptable. An education worker acknowledged the sophistication of younger audiences; their familiarity with a range of technological media meant that they *'don't necessarily rely on a normal linear sense of narrative ... they can deal with sort of bits and make up their own structure'*. He felt the company was *'prepared to meet'* the challenge, and intended to work with schools *'at different levels, whether it's primary school level or academic level'*.

The first sections of the typology related to client-centred education aims. The last two, sections D and E, are concerned with education aims more closely associated with dance itself, and with the artistic and financial concerns of individual dance companies. As explained earlier, it was the aims in section E which recurred most frequently in the data.

D. Dance-centred education aims

8. to develop dance skills

a. for those aiming for dance as a profession

b. for anyone interested in dance

9. to develop the capacity for critical appreciation of dance

a. to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of dance and dance styles

b. to inform and educate audiences/learners about particular pieces

c. to extend knowledge of the historical context of dance/ choreographers/composers

Although several of the smaller companies sought to provide *'an important stepping stone'* for young people interested in dance as a career, the two largest placed the most emphasis on training the professional dancers of

the future. Both companies ran regular summer schools and, in order to make dance more accessible for socio-economically disadvantaged children, one company had initiated a training scheme which offered '*free after-school ballet tuition*' to selected pupils from the surrounding junior schools following a series of informal open auditions. The other company's strategic policy document referred to placing '*greater emphasis*' on its education programme, and identified its intention '*to establish a controlling artistic interest in a school and apply the same criteria to the training within that school*' as those which applied to the company's artistic activities.

Learning dance skills was also seen as a source of pleasure and satisfaction for anyone interested in dance, irrespective of whether they eventually followed it as a career. Dance was seen as '*life-enhancing and life-affirming*'; and the skills involved as '*things that they can take into whatever profession or walk of life they choose*'.

Developing the capacity for critical appreciation and understanding of dance was one of the most frequently cited education aims in the typology. One interviewee drew a distinction between the three different levels of interpretation at work when an audience '*reads*', or responds to, a work of art.

- '**taste**': *personal preference, the unique response of every individual according to:*
  - *temperament/personality*
  - *individual life experience*
  - *the immediate temporal context of experiencing a particular work (mood, personal circumstances, personal reaction to external conditions including the response of other spectators/ participants, etc.);*
- *interpretation of* '**what it's saying to them**', *decoding the meaning or message the work may seek to convey;*
- *the application of* '**discourse**', *a collective form of interpretation, drawing on previous knowledge, understanding and experience of the artist, the artform and art and culture in general.*

He contended that without initiation into the '*discourse*' of the work:

> *They don't know how to read ... I don't mean even when they do understand it, they would like it – they may or they may not, it's a matter of taste – but it's unfamiliar very often, there's a discourse thing, it's not that accessible at a certain level, so I suppose what I am saying is that part of ... education is to help people understand what it is, what's involved in it, what language you are speaking to them, not just what it's saying to them ...*

According to this speaker, personal taste will determine whether the individual '*likes*' the work; by the same token it could be said that to some extent personal experience and ability may contribute to their interpretation

of '*what it's saying to them*'. But unless they have been provided with access to the '*discourse*', which develops a deeper understanding of the artform itself, which sets the work in a historical, cultural and aesthetic context, and which indicates its position in the artist's life and artistic development, they will be unable to understand or appreciate it for '*what it is*'.

An education officer said that '*teaching*' was '*vital*' in order to relate contemporary dance, frequently dismissed by the uninitiated as '*that thing with plink plonk music*', to its many cultural influences, because it was '*such a hard thing to sell*'. Another argued, like the speaker quoted above, that '*it's the familiarisation with this language, the deciphering and understanding of the language, that is the focus of arts education programmes*'.

E. Aims relating to the needs of dance companies

10. Education aims supporting artistic aims

a. to contribute to the development of dance (choreography/ technology/cross-arts)

b. to provide creative opportunities for choreographers

c. to commission and perform new music

d. to 'stretch' dancers (artistically/technically) by including education work in their professional development

11. Target group determined by artistic aims

In all but one of the dance companies, the education aims were seen as supporting artistic aims to various degrees. A company working with disabled people insisted it was '*the dance that's the focus, that's the main aim*', and one interviewee commented on the '*extraordinary*' power of dance to command total absorption from all participants, disabled and able-bodied, in creating work through movement together to the limits of their respective abilities. Another company's artistic policy declared their dedication to '*the advancement and innovation of quality dance performance*'. This company's interest in innovation permeated their '*extensive commitment to education*'. The company's recent work had been exploring '*ways in which new technology impacts on choreography*' and they had been developing new techniques not only in '*rehearsing of work*' but also '*in an educational setting*'.

Several interviewees referred to developing a fusion of artforms in their education work. In order to promote a culturally specific style of dance, one company had collaborated with a storyteller and a musician to work '*on the fringe*' of dance '*where this touches other artforms*'.

In a number of cases, education work was welcomed as a creative opportunity for artistic directors who were choreographers. In one of the smaller companies, however, where the director was also involved in delivering the work, attention was drawn to the pressure of continually creating new work to meet education aims, and the need for funding to employ '*guest choreographers*'. In another company, the highly sophisticated and adult nature of the director's artistic interests had led him to withdraw from all education work except that with degree-level students of dance, because he did not find '*the engagement at the level he needs in order to stimulate him*'.

Education work was also seen to provide creative opportunities for dancers to develop choreographic skills. In one company, an interviewee felt the scope for creativity in the dancers' regular work was very '*limited*', because they were '*dictated to, as it were*'; by contrast, the education work could offer them an exciting opportunity to work as choreographers.

Some of the companies welcomed the inherent challenges of education work in terms of commissioning and performing with new music. One organisation claimed to be '*unique*' in giving precedence to new composers, while others noted the creative opportunity afforded by the need to '*blend*' musical styles in order to attract a wider, or younger, audience. In one company, the musicians were said to be more '*involved*' in the education work than the dancers, in terms of their understanding of the education work and their creative contribution to it.

While some interviewees suggested that dancers should be paid for education work, regarding it as irrelevant to their artistic career, many others reported the value of education work for artists' professional development, technically and artistically, because it made them think more clearly about the artform and their own individual relationship with it. An artistic director said that, following a stabilisation programme, the company had realised that education was one of the '*vital ... things you need to succeed', and that education 'has to be two-way*'. He was very interested in 'the basic craft of choreography' and how it was perceived and interpreted, and he anticipated a '*constant exchange*' through '*meeting the audience*' during the company's education work over the next two years. An education officer also saw the role of education as '*a dual strand*', '*opening the company up*' to the community, and as a means of '*creative and personal and professional development for dancers*'. A dancer elsewhere observed that education was a '*very good way*', for him as well as for participants, '*of expressing and finding something individual within yourself*' which was '[your] *own creative work*'.

It was in the two largest companies that artistic aims were most explicitly seen to determine specific target groups, particularly in relation to perceptions of the company's distinctive style and repertoire. One interviewee explained that the company's work was '*more suitable for secondary-aged children*'. Another defended the validity of considering

dance '*in as penetrative a way*' as '*music or literature or art*'; the increasingly '*intellectual approach*' to this company's repertoire had resulted in directing the education work towards an older age group.

E. 12. Aims directed towards the survival of dance companies

a. audience development
   - *i) to build audiences for and broaden access to dance performances*
   - *ii) to ensure that young people perceive dance as relevant (repertoire, venue, marketing educational approach)*
   - *iii) to ensure that dance is perceived as relevant by boys and young men*

b. to develop appreciation of company's particular style/ repertoire/cultural context

c. to broaden dancers' skills/provide career opportunities for older dancers no longer involved in performance

d. to attract funding

Education aims relating to the survival of dance companies were predominant in the typology, and among these, building audiences, especially younger audiences, and developing appreciation of the company's individual style, repertoire and cultural context, were strikingly conspicuous. One interviewee was aware that there could be '*a division*' and '*mutual incomprehension*' in other dance companies between marketing and education; education departments could sometime be '*a bit self-righteous*' about '*doing the real stuff*'. He believed both marketing and education should be '*integrated*' and complementary functions of the company, so that marketing increased the size of the audience, '*the scope of it and its diversity*', and education enhanced '*the quality of the experience ... to understand it better*'.

To many individuals, however, the demarcation of responsibilities seemed less clear-cut, and, as recorded in Chapter 1, in smaller companies, education and marketing could be either a corporate responsibility or that of a single individual. One company's policy identified the aim of continuing '*to develop audiences for contemporary dance through both performances and the work of* [its] *education department*'. An education officer related both strands of the company's education work, tour workshops and self-contained performance projects, to an overall aim of '*accessibility to dance*', and, specifically, to the company's own '*style of dance*'.

Although most companies expressed the intention to stimulate the enthusiasm of younger audiences, this was a more deliberate commitment among some of the smaller organisations. In one case, the company's fundamental purpose was to offer '*disadvantaged young people*' the

opportunity of dance education and to use it in the interests of their personal development, to 'connect' with '*their ethos and culture and what they're doing and where they're going*'. At the same time, however, one of the company's members pointed out that '*youth culture*' crosses cultural boundaries, and that by relating initially to something '*they all have in common*', it is possible to draw young people towards an appreciation of dance from other cultural and artistic origins, thereby stemming its perceived '*decline*'.

Other companies also saw it as crucial '*to be aware of ever-changing youth culture*' in order to capture the street credibility which would attract young people to participate. One dancer commented that '*a lot of the time we're fighting against the MTV battle ... "we want to dance like on the videos"*'. Another interviewee advocated the need for training in this respect. She highlighted the problems inherent in outreach work in unstructured venues such as youth clubs, '*in a young person's own time*' compared with the '*controlled environment*' of school.

Elsewhere, an education worker expressed his agreement with the argument that '*the young now have different expectations of live performance*', and defined the eclectic, and frequently non-linear, approach of young people's spectating habits:

> *They tend to scan rather than meditate. They are intensely visual. They don't necessarily need a narrative. They can deal with juxtaposition ... with many things at one time. They are very aware of rhythm and they can relate more to sequence than to static single images.*

The importance of relating to young people's culture, the advantages of transferring arts events to young people's own cultural venues, and the nature of contemporary '*spectating patterns*' was highlighted in recent research on extending young people's access to traditional artforms (Harland and Kinder, 1999, p. 54). The study described '*cross-over*' events in youth arts venues where '*well-established contemporary dance companies gave performances alongside young people in an exchange of vernacular and club styles*'; and suggested that '*multi-media events*' may be '*particularly well suited*' to younger audiences' expectations.

Several companies were particularly concerned to engage with boys and young men. An education officer commented that making dance palatable for them was '*a massive hurdle*' because '*it conjures up images in 13-year-old boys' minds that puts them off*'. A Board member elsewhere pointed out the '*great irony*' that boys at school '*resist dance*', yet '*the minute they get home you can't stop them ... they go out on an evening and you can't keep them in their seats; they are dancing all the time ...*'.

One company was 'particularly well known' for their work with young men, and cited a long-term project in a school which was perceived to have had a very positive effect on participants' behaviour and academic performance. An interviewee elsewhere emphasised the value of '*longer-*

term kind of systems ... not blitz projects' for developing '*sustained commitment*' with boys and young men. Members of one company felt that the increasing emphasis in their repertoire on '*controversial*' themes such as violence, sexuality, and also homosexuality, could make performances more appealing in this respect.

Cultivating an appreciation of a company's distinctive 'style' emerged as one of the most prevalent aims across all companies. This in itself underlined the urgency of their determination to develop a loyal following in a world where dance companies compete for audiences with one another, with other arts organisations and with the increasing attractions of other, rapidly developing technological forms of entertainment. Culturally specific companies sought to '*promote a cultural experience through dance*'. It frequently seemed that '*the most urgent thing*' was '*how do we make the education work really reflect the artistic vision of the company?*' An education officer referred to '*consistency in teaching*' as a priority, and a dancer elsewhere depicted '*a common thread*' running through all his company's education projects. As noted earlier, the involvement of a company's own dancers was frequently a crucial component in this process of '*standardisation*'.

A minority of interviewees drew explicit attention to the value of education work in opening career opportunities for older dancers who no longer participated in performances. Dance as a profession was held to be relatively short, because of the unstinting demands in physical terms. The psychological strain of adhering to such a rigorous physical discipline can make dance '*physically and emotionally risky*', as acknowledged in a recent article on dance which reported that '*stress*' for dancers '*comes from overwork not from the thing itself*' (Hargreaves, 2000). One company believed it was the company's responsibility to offer dancers career opportunities in this respect, and had evolved a highly structured form of professional development in collaboration with a local university. Education was seen as a valuable means of broadening dancers' skills in order for them to remain associated with their profession once they were ready to retire from their role on stage. Dancers who had taken advantage of this course were seen to have benefited not only in direct vocational terms, but also because the study of dance in a much wider cultural context had been intellectually stimulating, and had nurtured the capacity for critical reflection. They themselves agreed with senior managers that they had acquired a much more enthusiastic approach to education work for its own sake. Senior managers also commented that the course had equipped the dancers to analyse and '*question*' the way the company operated in relation to other organisations.

Interviewees were generally very open about the limits imposed on both artistic and education work by a shortage of funds, and, in smaller companies particularly, the drain on time, energy and resources which fundraising required. In some cases, education clearly played an essential part in the company's fundraising activities. One individual, who found he '*got a lot of inspiration from teaching*', nevertheless saw education as the company's

main fund-raising '*tool*'. When asked whether all companies should provide education work, an interviewee elsewhere said it seemed '*you have to now, to get funding*' and that for her company it seemed '*a priority*'. By contrast, a member of a third company claimed there were no '*conditions*' attached to their education work: '*We do it because actually we genuinely feel that there's a very important place for it.*' As part of '*a specific decision*' to support the education work themselves, another organisation had recently started a budget designated for training and education resources. In another case, it was alleged that the company never sought education work to attract funding '*even though it would strengthen their bids if they did*'.

E. 13. Dissociation from education aims

Although all but one of the companies in the sample professed education aims with varying degrees of commitment, many interviewees acknowledged the right of others to concentrate on their artistic mission alone if that suited them best. This was the case with the tenth organisation; while other members were involved in education work outside the company, there was unanimous support for the artistic director's fundamental philosophy: '*the freedom of the artist is absolutely to be cherished*'. Education work became a possibility only as a funding requirement for productions where the artistic potential appealed to the director's essentially experimental creative style.

The preceding discussion of the typology has analysed the diversity of education aims identified by dance companies in the sample, and explored the way in which these aims are frequently interrelated. Reference has already been made to the fact that some companies had recently redefined their education aims, while others were currently engaged in the process of review. The following section will outline influences on education aims in companies where changes were perceived to have occurred. The final two sections will consider views on whether all companies should offer education programmes, and perceptions of the distinctive role of dance in relation to education.

2.3 Change and flexibility

According to the findings from the typology, the dance companies here appeared united in a concern to preserve their individual artistic identities. Deeply committed to education work and the potential benefits for participants as many interviewees undoubtedly were, they seemed resolved to communicate the value of dance through the company's own distinctive style. Thus, the singular nature of a company's '*style*' invariably instigated the momentum for education work. One artistic director confirmed that the artistic features of '*a new piece of work*' provide '*some of the beginnings of the way we work in education*'. In this case, a developing interest in technology had encouraged the company to concentrate much of their education work towards young people.

As already explained, some companies were in the process of a major reorientation of education aims in order to direct their education work more effectively towards groups perceived to be appropriate for their artistic purpose. An education officer said it had taken two years to work out how to make education more relevant to '*a performing dance company*' and how to use it '*to develop our audience*'. Another interviewee reflected on '*the direction the whole dance world has gone*' in the past few years. He felt that the repertoire of many dance companies had made them less accessible. Pointing to an '*incredible shyness about content within the profession*', he believed that an emphasis on the abstract had alienated potential audiences, who needed to engage on a '*human*' level.

In some companies, overarching education aims (as in the five main typology categories) were seen as unlikely to change, whereas those which were more tightly defined tended to depend on the nature of individual projects. In a culturally specific company, a Board member noted that aims would be related to '*length of project, what a particular school wants*'. Elsewhere, another interviewee commented that education aims had become more ambitious as company members gradually found '*better ways to deliver them*'; confidence had grown with expertise, particularly in terms of the age groups they had been working with. More will be said about aims in relation to specific projects in Chapter 3.

Given the perceived imperatives of artistic survival, interviewees defined a range of influences on education aims, which is outlined below.

Influence of artistic director

The crucial role of the artistic director's commitment to education work was referred to in the previous chapter. In many of the smaller companies, the artistic director was frequently seen as '*the person who comes up with ideas*' for the education programme. In one case, the integration of education into the company's fundamental ethos was seen to spring directly from the artistic director's inclination and ability as a '*natural teacher*'.

Influence of the Board

The influence of the Board on education aims varied from one company to another. In one case, the Board had been deliberately restructured, and the newly formed education subcommittee was regarded as a voice of authority by senior management. In several other companies, individual Board members were much appreciated for their educational expertise. By contrast, the Boards of three companies were seen to have a passive role; in one of these, the Board was said to be '*keen*' that the company's education projects maintained high-quality standards, but not directly involved in education policy.

Influence of constituents and the community

Smaller companies appeared to be more receptive to the influence of constituents, perhaps partly because their size itself enabled them to be more flexible and, pertinently, in the majority of cases, they needed to be responsive in order to secure their audiences. One executive producer was

enthusiastic in his portrayal of a much broader '*community environment*' in which dance companies could operate. From his perspective, changes within the community, and increasing '*cultural diversity*' in particular, had offered opportunities for moving away from the traditional '*dance workshop*', and a source of inspiration in terms of '*how you teach*'. Smaller companies were less likely to have developed a loyal following, and of these, the ones involved with young people affirmed the priority of keeping in tune with an essentially ephemeral '*youth culture*'.

Influence of the National Curriculum and other education initiatives

For those companies working with schools, linking activities to the curriculum was often crucial. One education officer had found it '*very hard*' to get into schools, or run a '*worthwhile out-of-school activity*' unless you could '*convince the youth workers, the young people, the schools, that this ties in with the National Curriculum*'. Elsewhere, a Board member referred to '*a school's expectations*', and whether dance and culture were important features of the curriculum or '*just seen as a casual experience or a pastime*'. For another company, the location of an Education Action Zone (EAZ) within one of their touring communities had been taken into account in their education aims for the next three years. Elsewhere, the Government's emphasis on lifelong learning was upheld as an incentive to extend the company's education work towards a broader age group.

The influence of partnerships

A number of interviewees recommended the invigorating effect of partnerships on education aims. One administrative director said his company were currently involved with '*at least two or three national organisations on long, two- or three-year projects*' in addition to partnerships with local theatres. An education officer elsewhere referred to a partnership with a recently appointed performing arts college which was anticipated to become '*increasingly active*' once the college came '*on stream*' in September 2000.

Voicing the general concern to offer something essentially '*unique*', one interviewee made a telling observation. He saw working alongside other dance companies as helpful, among other things, for finding '*a place ... to pitch our work ... within a dance ecology ... so we don't duplicate or tread on somebody else's toes*'.

Size of company

The way in which a company's size could influence the role of education was discussed in Chapter 1. In the smaller companies, the commitment of the artistic director tended to prevail across the entire organisation, and although the dancers' involvement usually remained at the practical level, there was a strong sense of working together '*as a team*'. In some companies, however, and particularly in the two largest companies, it was commonly pointed out that although everyone ostensibly approved of the education work as '*a really nice thing to be involved in*', many people had little idea of '*what it is*'. One company, as already explained, was actively seeking to

place its dancers at the heart of its education programme, in order to permeate it with the company's style. Dancers were currently seen to be so absorbed in advancing their careers that they were unaware of any wider implications to the occasional lecture recitals or workshops to which they were asked to contribute.

By contrast, another company was committed to employing dancers to lead education projects. In this case, the dancers were said to be well supported by appropriate training and resources and made to '*feel special*'. Such a positive experience was held to have reinforced the dancers' enthusiasm for education work to such an extent that this in itself was an additional force to the company's overall educational aspirations.

Other factors

Other influences were related to companies' individual circumstances and the specific experience of company members. Thus, developments in technology, and the increasing popularity of a multi-media approach among young people, had appealed to the choreographic inclinations of one company's artistic director. Elsewhere, a culturally specific company had broadened its repertoire to embrace dance styles from other cultures as a result of professional development. Government emphasis on '*child protection issues*' had influenced another organisation's relationship with schools. In two cases, education officers brought access to a range of contacts outside the company, including higher education in one case and the RAB in another.

Funding considerations

All companies acknowledged the influence of funding on education aims to some extent, whether the work was independent of funding conditions or not. In some cases, for example, local authority funding could propel a company's education work towards the surrounding community. A number of interviewees observed that although funding might not influence a company's fundamental commitment to education, it inexorably determined the nature and the scope of the activities themselves. One interviewee said education work had always been '*self-generated*' in that the idea came first, rather than as a response to funding conditions. He spoke for many others in highlighting the serious problems for planning which stemmed from being in the position of '*waiting for that phone call which says ... "Yes, you've got the money; you can start in a month*"'. Another individual explained that being project funded had severely '*limited*' their education work, because they could only plan one year ahead. A third warned that '*work without proper planning runs the risk of not achieving mutual aims*', in this case, aims which had been agreed with schools.

'Getting it off the ground': the need for long-term funding

Numerous interviewees across almost all companies advocated long-term funding as a crucial component of education work if it was to have any lasting impact on participants. (The exception was a case where in order to involve the dancers as fully as possible in education activities, the company was deliberately aiming for short-term projects to accommodate the dancers'

demanding artistic schedules.) Most importantly where young people were concerned, long-term '*sustained*' education projects were regarded as appreciably more effective than those of short-term duration. As one education officer confirmed:

> *It takes a long time to get a youth project off the ground. It took 18 months, and I've got here now – but it was a long slog, because you have to win them over.*

Another company was currently developing a youth group in the hope of making it '*permanent*', but they needed to raise '*a lot of extra money*' in order for it to be '*sustained*'. An interviewee elsewhere referred to the perceived success of a three-year project '*where the young people saw that there was something consistently happening*'. He contrasted this with another activity which had been funded for three days. This was held to have been just enough time to inspire the youngsters' enthusiasm, and then disappoint their expectations, allowing no time for them to engage in anything of lasting personal significance. '*It's about engaging, it's not just about doing a one-off*' was a view to which many experienced education workers subscribed.

2.4 Should all dance companies do education?

The question of whether all dance companies should do education work elicited a wide range of responses, which displayed agreement and dissent to varying degrees. Differences of opinion seemed to depend more frequently on individual perceptions and experiences than to be related to company ethos or priorities.

One individual drew a distinction between '*teaching about dance*' and '*teaching dance*'. For him, the latter, as he defined it, was only possible in companies like his own, where education was '*integral*' and '*education ... about people*', personal development (for all individuals as opposed to would-be professional dancers), was the overriding aim. He saw '*teaching about dance*' as the usual form of dance education undertaken by companies with self-contained '*education units*', and seemed to imply that activities where participants '*learnt something about the companies ... something about this dance ... or something issue based*' were somehow more perfunctory. By contrast, numerous individuals perceived such '*teaching about dance*' as an essential '*tool*' for developing an audience, for dance in general and for the company's own style of dance in particular, and they thought education was crucial to ensure the survival of dance as an artform. One speaker related education work to '*levels of accessibility*' rather than to any '*moral imperative*'. An experienced education worker elsewhere expressed a rather different view. As in the single example in the typology of deliberate dissociation from education aims, he believed that:

> *Some art is not for everybody ... and it doesn't make it any less valid ... some art is going to be possibly elitist ... and I think there is a place for that.*

At the same time, an indication of the conflicting pressures currently faced by dance companies emerged in the insistence of many individuals that dance companies should not be '*under duress*' or '*forced*', by social obligations, for example, to do education work. While a minority felt that dance companies had a '*responsibility*' to involve themselves in education if they were funded from '*the public purse*', there was a strong feeling among many interviewees that to be compelled to do education work in order to secure funding could be very '*dangerous*', and that it was better to fund those companies who were able '*to do it well*'. Interviewees warned repeatedly that dance companies should not engage with education at all unless it was appropriate for their artistic mission, '*a natural extension*' to their development, unless they were prepared to evolve '*an education strategy*' for planning the work, and unless company members were genuinely motivated or '*enthused*', and had been adequately trained.

2.5 The distinctive contribution of dance to education

While some individuals perceived the educational value of dance to lie in one specific dimension, many interviewees identified a range of potential benefits. One company member pointed out that all artforms seek to capture, crystallise and communicate some aspect of human experience through presenting either a single or multiple interpretation in concentrated form. In his view, dance, along with the other artforms, '*... is one of the ways in which we understand our own incarnation and how we can express ideas and feelings*'.

Dance: a holistic artform

The essential nature of dance was most clearly portrayed in the following observation:

> *One of the most challenging things about dance is that it consistently demands the whole person to be present, in mind, body and spirit.*

While different individuals emphasised particular aspects of dance, as an experience for participant or spectators, or both, the holistic interpretation above was a recurring motif. Dance had appealed to one professional '*because it teaches you to be totally present*'. As noted in the opening discussion on the typology, although personal development did not emerge explicitly as a prevailing educational aim, the passionate and persistent conviction with which interviewees highlighted the potential benefits of dance for the individual conveyed an unmistakable commitment to its role in this respect.

Dance 'makes people feel good about themselves'

Some comments highlighted the purely physical benefits of dance; it was suggested that '*body awareness, health issues*' are often the aspects of dance

which are '*pushed*' in dance lessons at school. However, the physical aspect of dance was much more frequently aligned with emotional, intellectual and spiritual experience. '*Motion and emotion are inseparably linked, both semantically and in external reality*' (Storr, 1992). The temporary 'lift' and '*vibrant*' sense of well-being experienced after energetic activity have been widely recognised in health studies; many interviewees referred to the exhilaration which ensues from a simultaneous release of energy and emotion.

A number of company members drew attention to the capacity of dance, through the '*absence of text*', to engage the emotion and imagination in '*non-verbal learning*'. One individual believed '*it changes attitudes and perceptions of life*', and another elsewhere claimed that dance offered children a '*mental stimulus ... to engage with such a variety of things*' that their education was impoverished without it. One interviewee referred to the '*intellectual*' potential of dance to convey the complex and challenging aspects of human relationships.

As with other artforms, the value of participation in dance was universally acknowledged, in terms of liberating unexplored capacities for creativity, and for the consequent surge in self-esteem. One individual thought that dance was especially valuable for young people '*in a country like England where we don't really express ourselves very much in a physical way*'. Another interviewee drew attention to the opportunities for young people to indulge their capacity for experimentation in '*safe*' surroundings, and be '*even more spontaneous ... even more kind of risk-takey than they would normally be*'. Elsewhere, the fact that '*kids get an instant sense of achievement*' was felt to be particularly important for those with very few positive experiences in other areas of their lives.

'It's a spiritual thing'

The number of references to the spiritual dimension of dance was striking. Many interviewees referred to the '*concentration*' and '*discipline*' the art requires. An experienced education worker explained that for young people particularly, '*once you have found that discipline in dance, it does run over into your personal life*'. For those who were dancers, the reduction of one's whole being to a state of total concentration on the perfect coordination of body and mind could be an almost mystical experience:

> *Connecting with something other than yourself ... a spiritual aspect of it in some mysterious way, and I think it is very important that that is there, and you dance for something, or transforming yourself into something. There is still a strange mystery and magic at the heart of it that is there to be taught.*

While acknowledging the distinctive contribution of dance to personal development, in its 'holistic' capacity to absorb the body, mind and spirit in total concentration, many interviewees also referred to its cultural and collective dimension. Although the latter could also be said to apply to the

other performing arts, it is perhaps the fusion of physical, mental and 'spiritual' capacities which renders the collective experience of dance unique.

Dance as cultural 'ambassador'

'*Dance is one of the ways of encouraging cultural engagement and understanding, connections with people ...*'. A number of interviewees, especially those from the culturally specific companies, emphasised the importance of dance in the communication of culture. Many cultures develop artforms which are culturally specific. Early forms of dance, music and drama were frequently rooted in ritual, and evolved as integral parts of the daily life and self-expression of a culture. For members of culturally specific companies, the promotion of cultural cohesion through the '*historical/cultural perceptions of the form*' appeared at times to be as, or more, important than the artform itself.

Collaboration: 'all their power as corporation'

Dance was widely seen as a highly effective '*non-verbal*' means of developing '*cooperation, partnership, all those things which are ... critically important*'. One interviewee thought dance was '*a brilliant medium for getting over a lot of barriers without having to deal with them directly*'. He cited a mixed-sex workshop where '*having to touch different people, having to move together ... just gets dealt with, without making any big deal of it at all*'. He felt that in this respect dance could be more effective than drama, where '*having to be talking about ... hang-ups and issues*' could seem more threatening. It was generally agreed that working in dance with other people, without recourse to speech, requires complete commitment of mind and body to the task in hand. The potency of collective concentration was widely recommended for generating cooperation and collaboration.

It might be said that anyone can admire the grace, balance and control implicit in dance; the mental and spiritual poise it implies appeals to a common human aspiration for inner equilibrium. However, the concentration involved in the perfect execution of sequences of movement, according to the choreographer's, and dancer's, intention, demands a corresponding degree of concentration from the audience in order for it to be appreciated to the full. An audience has to assimilate and respond to a performance as it occurs. As interviewees here were keen to point out, for audiences to get the most out of a performance, they need prior understanding of its purpose and context. While their interpretative skills may be directed towards the unfolding of a clearly discernible linear narrative in some performances, in others, audiences may now be increasingly expected to simultaneously interpret a range of media, including technology, which offer a further dimension or commentary on the dance itself.

In considering the current accessibility of dance, one interviewee referred to two '*important strands*' of participation, one relating to '*the doer*', someone who directly participates, as a dancer, or as a choreographer, and the other relating to '*the viewer*', someone who participates indirectly, as a member of the audience. The need to equip younger audiences, especially,

for an active role as '*critical spectators*' has been identified by researchers elsewhere (Harland and Kinder,1999). The experienced professional referred to here was committed to an expanding programme of education work. Nevertheless, in terms of the company's artistic and financial survival, the question of '*how to educate the viewer*' without compromising artistic integrity was '*quite a challenge ...*', albeit '*an interesting challenge*'.

2.6 Education aims: concluding comments

The diversity of the companies in the sample, and the variety and interrelatedness of the aims they expressed, mean it has been possible to offer no more than a very broad indication of the frequency of aims occurring in the data. A number of aims tended to be concentrated within single companies, and the insistence in each organisation on the unique character of their artistic identity was striking.

Many interviewees offered eloquent interpretations of the importance of dance to personal development. In numerous cases, this was seen as the distinctive contribution of dance to education. Personal development did not feature as strongly as other aspirations in perceptions of a company's education aims as a whole. However, given interviewees' evident belief in the power of dance in this respect, the relatively lower status of personal development may suggest that it was somehow understood, or taken for granted, in references to community aims, or to aims associated with deepening the quality of dance appreciation.

In terms of education aims overall, those which concerned the survival of dance companies, and those centred on the development of dance and dance appreciation, were undoubtedly the most predominant. Such a finding may suggest a lack of confidence, on the part of dance companies, in the validity of dance as an artform in its own right. Dance, if it is on the curriculum at all, is still presented within the PE department in many schools. Outside schools, dance, as practised by professional dancers, often bears no relation to dance styles adopted and practised by young people, or other age groups. Individual company members were convinced of the personal enrichment dance can offer to both spectators and participants. Many of them, nevertheless, sensed the existence of a gulf between themselves and wider audiences. According to the evidence here, the majority of companies in the sample were already taking the initial steps to bridge this gap.

In a review of the current education activities of the companies under discussion, the following chapter will consider how the education aims identified here were being translated into practice.

3. DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

3.1 Overview

As stated before, this research comes at a time when many companies seem to be reappraising the place and role of education within their organisations by adopting all or combinations of the following strategies:

- reviewing aims and objectives
- strengthening relationships with key partners
- placing the education directorate more firmly in the centre of planning
- jointly planning a new artistic and education programme
- employing a new education officer
- undertaking training schemes for dancers
- refocusing the provision of the work to meet more specific targets.

This chapter outlines the way education programmes are initiated and planned and the partnerships which are forged to enable them to take place. It looks at who carries out the work, who the target groups are, and examines the extent to which formulae are used or whether work is 'bespoke', that is, tailored to the needs of the target group.

It explores the roles certain individuals play in enabling the programme to take place and, in particular, looks at the role taken by the education officer within the companies. In considering the relationship between education aims, that is, what companies aspire to do, with the actual programmes they provide, certain projects are described in more detail, linking the design of the project with the typology of aims outlined in Chapter 2. The question of whether the companies consider themselves to be proactive, taking the lead in initiating work, or reactive in responding to demand is also discussed, but it would seem that, while they might define themselves in theory as being either one or the other, in practice, all companies tended to move between both positions, both consciously and unconsciously.

After tracing the development of projects from the germ of an idea to the final stages, the chapter concludes with a look at evaluation – how projects are currently evaluated, who takes part in the process and how, if at all, evaluation is used to inform future work. It should be noted that the interviews themselves were often welcomed as a useful way of examining

the direction of education work and reflecting on practice. In the words of one respondent: '*We have never really done this ... to actually talk about it starts to stir certain things ... it starts bringing back ideas of how you can continue developing the work or coming up with new ideas.*'

3.2 The origination of project idea

Throughout this chapter, 'programme' means the overall scheme of work, while 'project' denotes a discrete aspect of the programme.

3.2.1 Creative partnerships

Most education work is the result of forging short-term and long-term partnerships with individuals and organisations who can either assist the companies in putting the overarching aims of their education policy into practice, or, more pragmatically, can offer the resources and expertise to propel a specific initiative, which may fit less overtly within the framework of aims.

The most mentioned planning partners were individual schools. After schools came the National Dance Agencies, local dance development agencies and individual community dance workers. But partnerships with these agencies were more noticeable and stronger amongst the smaller, contemporary dance companies than the large- or middle-scale. The strengths of the dance development organisations were not perceived to be in helping to devise the artistic content of projects (although this can happen, as in: '*we want to do an inter-generational project; will you lead?*'), but in acting as conduits for delivery, mapping the terrain, and effecting introductions to other funding partners or collaborators. Their contribution is considered invaluable by the companies, because they have a wealth of experience, extensive local knowledge, and a deep understanding of community dance.

But while the regional dance agencies were largely praised for their input in setting up work and forging partnerships, one administrator of a culturally specific company spoke of misunderstandings about the company's intentions and capabilities:

> *... there are a lot of national dance agencies who won't commission us and won't fund us and give us real dates and who say 'Oh we've got some rural touring'. We've passed the stage where they should be sending us out to village halls because our work is such fun and it's so accessible.*

Other key partnerships were with local authorities, youth services, trusts and foundations. Business sponsors rarely featured. Social and health services were also mentioned very infrequently. The partnerships within local authorities were usually with the arts development officers, for

example, in initiating a rural touring project. Schemes led by voluntary agencies, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, were occasionally tapped into as a way of accessing a broader range of participants.

In the case of partnerships with schools, contact was mostly through individual teachers, both non-specialist and dance teachers, and these relationships were often ongoing over several years. There was less evidence of strong partnerships with schools being established through generic schemes or developments such as specialist status schools, Excellence in Cities, or the Gifted and Talented scheme, or of exploring the role dance companies might play within EAZs. If there was awareness of such developments, it was with the sense that they were rather arcane – a theme which will be developed in Chapter 4.

It is notable that creative partnerships were rarely forged with other dance companies, although many expressed the wish that this was otherwise. Nor was there a sense of much dissemination of practice or transferable models, although the Joint Education Officers' Group was thought to be a useful forum for support and information exchange.

The two largest companies, who had established positive and significant partnerships with a particular local authority, expressed a greater commitment to their local community than others. Their difficulty lay in balancing these needs with those of the touring communities. These included cities they had been visiting regularly over many years, where levels of deprivation could be even higher than in the city in which they were based. The problem was how to maintain a meaningful presence in several major cities on the touring schedule, while at the same time creating and sustaining partnerships at home.

The idea that companies should establish close connections with a particular area of the country, by creating educational opportunities ahead of and after its visits, was first mooted in *The Glory of the Garden: The Development of the Arts in England* (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1984). It seems that this might be resurfacing as a proposition, particularly as some companies seemed to be developing special relationships with specific areas where their work had been successful:

> *I would like to see us having a stronger presence in the tour areas, rather than just going in and doing something tokenistic and coming away again, being an organisation that's not there all the year round, but is at least appearing at a time when the company is not performing, going down there to do work with schools or community groups at other times.*

The comment above, from an education officer, was particularly interesting in that it was reiterated by the education officer of another company, about precisely the same geographic area, which might indicate potential for exploring a more collaborative approach to developing work.

Some companies had developed symbiotic relationships with the area where they were based, being offered free rehearsal space, for example, in exchange for teaching community classes and setting up a youth development programme in their local borough. Another ran an evening class programme at its rehearsal premises, taught by company dancers, and was about to plan a major performance project in partnership with a neighbouring theatre.

The smaller, more nomadic companies, felt no particular commitment to the community in which their administration was based; their allegiances were formed with venues and areas on their touring circuit. However, they may have developed special relationships with certain local authorities, usually with an officer with responsibility for developing dance in education, where their services had been particularly appreciated by a number of schools, to whom they had made repeated visits.

3.2.2 Who has the idea?

Ideas for projects came from many sources: sometimes, it was the education officer implementing schemes which related to specific education aims. An example of this was the company whose central education priority was to create audiences for its work, by setting up a series of workshops ahead of a performance to ensure a more informed, ready-made audience. Sometimes, the initiative was top-down, for example, a Board member or even the chief executive with contacts within certain contexts who suggested: '*Wouldn't it be a good idea to do a project with such-and-such?*'. An example of this was the project set up in partnership with a large national organisation, delivered by animateurs in out-of-town sites. This project had the general long-term aim of building audiences, but the specially devised content, some way removed from the core artistic programme, was aimed at target groups unfamiliar for this company: the under-fives and the over 55s.

As an indicator of commitment by the senior management team to the education programme, this 'top-down' approach was seen to be useful. However, the education team referred to here found it rather frustrating, since for the rest of the year the education work was seen as an adjunct to the main business of getting the show on stage and on the road.

Opportunities for dancers to initiate projects tended to be restricted. They occurred more frequently in companies where it was harder to separate education and artistic agendas, in those in which the latter had sometimes actually evolved out of the former in order to implement a particular policy, such as that of integrated practice, and in those where there was a more of a cooperative rather than hierarchical structure. Dancers themselves rarely took the lead in suggesting partnerships. One company had planned a project in a primary school where one of the dancers had a child attending, but that was because the relationships with the traditional partnership agencies had not yet been established. A more positive example of dancers taking a lead was when they expressed interest in working with a particular group, such as boys and young men.

Sometimes, it was individual schools who approached the company for a new project or a follow-up to a previous one. At other times, the agenda was set by a dance work being part of the syllabus for examination at GCSE or A-level. In this case, it was seen as relatively easy, if somewhat time consuming, to prepare education 'packages' to take into schools.

Increasingly, it was the artistic vision and ambition of the artistic director which determined how projects originated, as in '*It is still part and parcel of my job and my understanding of how I work, part of that whole understanding of why we are doing it and what we are doing*'. In this case, the education programme was usually, but not always repertoire driven: '*We set the artistic programme and then find mechanisms by which we can have a really engaging education programme*' (artistic director).

3.2.3 Proactive versus reactive

Companies were asked whether they saw themselves as essentially proactive or reactive in their approach to the work, and what were the advantages and disadvantages of each approach. The proactive/reactive dilemma existed at two junctures: at the planning and creating partnerships stage and in actually carrying out the projects.

Companies seemed to consider themselves as either wholly reactive, as in '*artists in education must work reactively and responsively*', or entirely proactive – '*the strength is that you know your own worth and what you can contribute; this is who we are and this is what we can do – instead of trying to do what's expected of you*' – with positions in between, as in '*If an opportunity comes up which is a good one and which will enrich the company overall, it would be silly not to respond*'. It would appear that, while companies are idealistic, they are also pragmatic and realistic in their approach.

Occasionally, a reactive approach was a creative response to the cultural zeitgeist. The development of new technologies, the changing role of males within our culture, advances in disability awareness, greater awareness of environmental issues, have all stimulated ideas for programmes and projects. Where being reactive resulted from establishing sustainable partnerships with particular target groups, the outcome was an openness to new experience which led to greater creativity: '*It doesn't matter where the idea comes from ... if it's workable then I think it should be worked*' (dancer) and '*it makes it more exciting*'. On the other hand, when it was driven by funding considerations, perhaps by a sponsor who was unclear about, or at odds with, the company's own purposes, then being reactive was seen as a negative experience.

A proactive bias seemed to exist within companies which had a clear artistic mission, shared by all the dancers, who were either strongly led by a dynamic artistic director or dance *auteur*, or were ensembles with a shared belief in the work they were creating. This stance seemed easier to maintain within

smaller companies and more difficult within large, where there was a more diffuse chain of command and/or sense of purpose. But some interesting internal bargaining could still take place. Income from reactive and routine education work, for example, might service artistic experiment, and even the most hard-line proactivist might be seduced by the challenge to deliver an artistically stimulating project, as in '*Will you choreograph 30 kids on some hills?*'.

While it was thought desirable that ideas for projects could come from anywhere – '*it could come from a child at school; if he has this great idea, then we should be able to listen to that*' (dancer) – in practice that rarely happened. Respondents expressed a wish to be more open to ideas coming from participants, as well as from brokers or funding partners in the initial stages of a project. Project planning was thus seen as a process of informed research and development: '*There needs to be collaborative research, with artists and teachers coming together to fulfil the need for creativity and innovation.*' It could then become more of a two-way partnership which had links with the ongoing process of evaluation:

> *I think that the way forward for the company is not trying to keep hitting lots and lots of different buttons, but to do it in a planned way and to make sure that your evidence for doing it and your strategic thinking is strong as a result of feedback you're getting from the people you have a relationship with.*

It seems that most companies preferred to continue to develop strong proactive education policies, while at the same time remaining open to the possibility of projects originating from unusual sources, which provided creative inspiration.

3.3 Planning and designing projects

3.3.1 Who plans and designs?

Where the artistic director took a strong interest in education and had direct involvement in delivery, they were also more likely to sit down with the participants, for example schools, and work out the details. But this process was also perceived to be taxing and demanding.

While it was acknowledged that planning was essential – indeed the success of the projects was often seen as directly proportional to the amount of planning – it seemed in practice there was rarely enough time for as much as was desirable. In fact, some meetings seemed to take place informally, in the car on the way to a school, for example, as well as in more formal settings.

Two findings emerged. Firstly, there was a relatively low level of involvement of dancers in the planning and designing of projects, and again the larger the company, the more the process was handed down. One dancer

commented: '*... the main idea is the artistic director's and we all sit down and talk about what this is.*' Secondly, it was acknowledged that '*without those teachers who are really committed to helping young people come along to those projects, it becomes very problematic*'. Such comments paid tribute to the fact that the contexts for setting education work in motion are often complex to negotiate. Many interviewees agreed that those who were most passionate about the work, be they a teacher in school, a community dance worker, a regional dance agency or an education officer in a venue, often invested huge amounts of energy in helping the project move from the planning stages to reality. These agents were then fundamental to making the project effective by acting as manager, advocate, rehearsal director and, generally, willing it to succeed.

3.3.2 Planning techniques

If, as in the case of most companies here, creating, rehearsing and performing are held to be the main business of dance companies, then both the long-term, and the day-to-day, planning of education projects can only take place with reference to the demands of the core activity, which always take priority. Releasing dancers to take part in education projects, on a large or more modest scale, often entails delicate negotiations with the rehearsal staff, and in larger organisations can perhaps result in situations where formulae are adopted as a solution to the intractability of working round the rehearsal schedules. Managers and rehearsal directors may be convinced of the importance of education work to a greater or lesser degree, so that extricating dancers can be difficult '*because the priority lies with the performance; it's a lengthy process of trying to even the workload*'. In this way, what is planned and then takes place is often what is possible, not what is ideal.

In smaller organisations, where the education officer or other person responsible for carrying out the projects was closer to the management and long-term planning of the company, then it was in theory easier for education projects to be blocked in ahead of time, and for dancers or freelance staff to be assigned to facilitate them. But there was still a sense across all companies, apart from that tiny minority for whom education was their *raison d'être*, that it was a precarious business, in which last-minute cast changes could mean removing dancers from education projects at short notice.

In the larger companies, releasing dancers to take part in education projects depended upon building sympathetic relationships:

> *I think it's how you make links with people, how you involve them, how you win them over. And this is largely dependent on the artistic director taking the lead – even setting the example by taking part in projects. I think if the artistic director is saying 'This is important, and I want to engage with it, and I will come and do lecture demonstrations with you', immediately it raises the profile with the dancers and makes them think 'This is important' ... and also the rehearsal staff and that's a layer that hasn't been tackled particularly.*

The basic structure of planning seemed to involve large meetings with all the major stakeholders, at which the shape of the project was determined, followed by smaller sessions working out detail. It was from the former that the dancers and animateurs were often excluded. This is perhaps an area for further development, considering the artistic and continuing professional development benefits which might accrue to dancers, companies and other collaborators alike.

On an individual level, the technique of planning could often be spontaneous and child centred, as expressed by this practitioner of a non-western form: '*I sit down and think how can I entice or educate or entertain these children? I visualise what children would like to do.*' Some dancers referred to the practice of not planning an individual session too tightly, in order to be responsive both to the participants and the development of material as the session progressed.

3.3.3 Developing formulae

Use of formulae varied from companies which used none, with every project newly minted, to those which were heavily dependent on the tried-and-tested. Others used combinations of these approaches. A formula considered appropriate to the needs of schools might involve a warm-up, learning an excerpt from a work in the repertoire, then, sometimes, but not always, '*being enabled to do some creative work*', followed ideally by a visit to a performance by the company. Some companies had moved away from this to the point of disparaging the formulaic approach:

> *The education models which are about offering one-off workshops, the delivery of residencies, all those older models of education work, although they work in the short term, kind of number-crunching – you can get good evaluations for them – those are the most dissatisfying education programmes ... the most unimaginative way in which we can deliver educational activity.*

On the other hand, formulae were seen to have advantages in that '*if something has worked then we should do it again, but the funding makes for a "one-off" culture*'. There is something in this about whether a formula is a model of good practice, with obvious benefits of repetition if time and funding allow, or whether it is a tired, unimaginative format used for reasons of cost and expediency. Views on the value of formulae seemed to be associated with perceptions of being reactive or proactive, and the implication that companies sometimes felt compelled to devise new projects in order to unlock funding, or in response to particular initiatives by the funding bodies. The Year of the Artist was quoted as an example in this respect.

Generally speaking, ways of working were linked to the rhythm of the companies' year. Formulae were convenient and appropriate when on tour, and could be facilitated by the dancers, while projects back at base might be led by the education department and freelancers. Other projects fitted into a break in the regular schedule, with time for research and development;

they could be more experimental and less formulaic, involving more company members. In one case, an education project was seen to have influenced the research and development of a new work for the company's repertoire. In another example, a whole company became suddenly available because of a cancelled touring week and was then accessible for an intensive week of education work, albeit hastily planned.

One organisation was in the process of changing its education priorities, moving its usual age range, and using the newer repertoire in work with older pupils on a week-long residency. This challenge led to the involvement of the artistic director, the composer, the dancers and the wardrobe department in a cross-curricular project which had dramatically changed attitudes within the school: '*Day one and it was of hostility, absolute hostility – by the end of the week, it was absolutely tremendous. People who weren't even taking part were pressed up against the windows.*' And it was apparent that the experience had had a positive effect on the company too.

Use of formulae in planning projects often depended on the level of investment, personal and financial, in the outcome by the stakeholders: the higher the investment, the more original the structure tended to be. The more formulaic, 'off-the-shelf' methods of working included:

- one-off workshops, usually described as 'tasters' in venues, schools and colleges in advance of performances;
- a regular programme of technique classes in the community;
- a series of workshops in a school or schools, FE and HE, either linked to a work in the repertoire or on a cross-curricular theme, leading up to a performance or sharing to which other pupils, students, schools and/or parents were invited;
- a similar formula in youth centres or day centres;
- repertoire-based workshops in school followed by a visit to a regular performance, a specially devised matinee or a lecture-demonstration;
- an intensive week of activities – either a summer school or a residency – sometimes developing choreographic skills, sometimes focusing on producing a new work to be performed by the participants; and
- the production of resource materials, sometimes via e-mail. These contained selections on dance, costume, history and music, with suggestions for cross-curricular use. These could sometimes be accessed by e-mail. Companies also offered access to archives with, occasionally, meetings with artistic director and other personnel.

In terms of the amount of work provided, there was the perception of being pulled in all directions: '*everyone wants a bit of us in some way*' (education officer). The knowledge that it was '*impossible to be all things to all people*' conflicted with the need to develop audiences and broaden access.

Dance companies appeared to believe that the demand, actual and potential, for education work was huge and the current supply insufficient to meet it. In this context, it may be that using formulae could be a cost-effective way of meeting demand.

3.4 Leading the projects

According to the findings of this research, an essential dilemma faces all dance companies wishing to engage in education: how to provide a stimulating, relevant programme, which incorporates the aims of all the stakeholders, which targets the work where it is most needed, and which uses all the resources at its disposal in such a way that it enriches, rather than depletes, the company's creative energies.

3.4.1 The education officer

The person most often charged with this responsibility was the education officer. In the words of one administrator: '*The education officer is someone who has the trust of both the artistic director and the education community.*' This is such a delicate balancing act that considerable space has been given to discussion of the issues surrounding this pivotal post.

Some education officers worked in close partnership with the artistic director. Another was placed alongside marketing and fundraising, an alignment felt to be somewhat inappropriate. Those companies which were temporarily without an officer noticed the difference in the quality of work they had been able to achieve, to the extent that practice had lapsed altogether after becoming increasingly reactive. In the smaller companies, it was possible for the officer to be party to long-term strategic planning. In larger companies, this was more difficult, but where an officer *had* been made part of the senior management team, the benefits were demonstrable.

Some education officers had previously been dancers or arts managers, perhaps with the company they now worked for. Some had trained as community dance workers, while others had a more general background in the arts or arts management. Only one came from a background purely in education, though not in dance education. Their function seemed to be to:

- keep abreast of current developments in the appropriate fields, both dance and education
- undertake appropriate professional development
- instigate, plan and facilitate projects
- negotiate partnerships and prepare funding applications
- consolidate partnerships with relevant agencies
- liaise effectively with all participants (dancers, teachers, youth workers, pupils and other artistic collaborators)

- liaise effectively with all company personnel (administrative, rehearsal and artistic directors)
- manage the project day-to-day
- recruit external personnel to undertake the work – animateurs, musicians, etc.
- brief those leading the project on aims and objectives
- set up systems for evaluation and monitoring and ensure dissemination
- act as the organisation's 'memory' – using experiences of the past to inform the future and as the platform from which to encourage the company to take risks and forge new partnerships
- attend performances so as to be familiar with the core artistic programme
- commission, prepare and disseminate resource materials
- teach on projects
- act to ensure responsible practice (implementing Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Child Protection policies)
- identify the need for and implement professional development programmes for those facilitating education programmes
- keep a foot in the 'real' world as opposed to the somewhat rarified atmosphere of the dance company
- ensure synthesis between the educational and artistic activities.

Above all, they seemed to act as the 'conscience' of the organisation in putting education at the top of its agenda and then acting as the moderator of its practice, balancing artistic aspirations with contextual and financial constraints and devising effective programmes which would satisfy a number of different and sometimes conflicting needs. In short, it was seen to be about '*coming up with ideas and overcoming obstacles to get them done*'.

While sharing practice in a forum with other education officers was welcomed, it would appear that there is little coherent provision of support, or opportunities for relevant professional development, for this key figure, and that they can feel undervalued:

> *You have less budget than everybody else. You have less status than everybody else. You have less salary than everybody else, but the second and third sentence in the company's artistic policy is how vital to the lifeblood of the company the education work is. And you don't know how frustrating it is when nobody turns up to see your project's sharing.*

Education officers seemed to feel that they had huge potential both within and across dance companies and in related fields. They were keenly aware of expanding opportunities in a rapidly changing landscape.

3.4.2 Core staff

It seemed that the closer, both literally and metaphorically speaking, the education work was to the core activity of the company, the easier it was for the company to facilitate the work themselves. The larger the company, the harder it was to release personnel to carry out the education work. 'Personnel' usually meant dancers (rarely musicians, except for non-western forms, where they could be integral to practice), and 'education' principally meant education through and about dance and dance performances. Despite their extensive resources, larger companies tended not to deploy all their personnel in education activities. However, one large-scale company was reviewing this approach and looking at how it might use the whole company, wardrobe staff, designers and its orchestra in future.

In some cases, it was part of the dancers' contract to undertake education work, but levels of commitment varied considerably. For example, in one company, '*they do them on a rotation basis, so that each one tends to do one every year or 18 months*'. Others seemed to have arrived at a more informal implicit understanding that education was part of their work.

In the smaller contemporary companies, '*the education work is carried out by dancers not an education team – they go out as performers, not teachers, with a clear sense of the company's ethos*'. Making this distinction between dancers and animateurs was very important to some organisations. In some contemporary companies, dancers might prepare the groundwork for the artistic director to come in and add the final touches. Sometimes, the artistic director would be closely involved in the programme, especially where it had research and development implications for the company itself, for example in the use of new technologies.

Work resulting from an individual's enjoyment of, and deep sense of commitment to, teaching and/or their essential charisma could lead to problems in 'letting go' and entrusting the work to others, with the converse, the unwillingness of the recipients to accept substitutes. This was more notable in the non-western forms; in these cases, the education programme was about more than providing an experience of dance; it acted as an introduction to a different culture in its many aspects and/or acted as a challenge to existing assumptions about gender and race.

3.4.3 Freelance staff

Where dancers were not available, the next best option was considered to be dancers formerly employed by the company, who could be relied upon to understand the style and ethos and maintain quality: '*We aim for people who have contact with the company.*' Sometimes, a group of dancers was formed almost as a quasi-company to carry out the education programme. As a last resort, companies relied on freelance animateurs in the confidence that, while they might not know the company as well, at least they had the advantage of knowing the community and of having trained in methods appropriate to the contexts.

In some cases, it was animateurs who facilitated the bulk of a company's output, particularly in schools. A number of them not only admitted to feeling isolated and undervalued, but also suggested that there was sometimes disappointment, or even confusion, amongst the recipients of the work when animateurs were deployed – a feeling that perhaps they were getting 'second best' by working with them, rather than with actual dancers. As one dancer observed: '*Schools want the real thing – real dancers*'. This perception did not appear to be linked to the quality of what was provided by the animateurs, but rather to reflect the expectation that the dancers would have something special and particular to bring to schools, while animateurs perhaps would have more in common with existing teaching staff.

It was noticeable that where animateurs were contracted, or '*farmed out*', to facilitate the education work, they were frequently excluded from the planning process: '*I was not part of the planning meetings but I was always informed what their ideas were. They fed it back to me.*' Where animateurs were not involved in planning, they often felt themselves to be distanced from the artistic heart and vitality of the company. Particularly if they were representing a high-profile organisation, they felt they needed to be knowledgeable about the current repertoire and close to the heart of educational planning. In instances where the animateurs *had* been given autonomy in developing the project artistically, there seemed to be disadvantages, in that the perception of the senior management team was that the education programme didn't then bear the *imprimateur* of the company itself, or sufficiently reflect its artistic policy. But when dancers from the company had come to see such a project, a specially devised community performance, for example, they had been impressed, and had felt it a useful and broadening learning experience. At times, the dance style used by animateurs was completely different from that of the company, as in the case of a classical company which had sometimes worked in a contemporary vein, thinking this was more appropriate to the needs of schools. The key questions seemed to be: in what capacity and in what circumstances do companies use animateurs? To what extent are they afforded the access to resources and professional development opportunities? And how important is it that their work reflects the company's core artistic activity?

Deciding who is to lead the education programme has implications for initial training, recruitment and continuous professional development. Professional dance is a dynamic not a fixed field; there may be considerable movement of dancers across and between companies, both nationally and internationally. Investment in one dancer or animateur, therefore, could potentially benefit many companies and, eventually, the dance community world-wide.

3.4.4 Other collaborators

Some companies had always used musicians as an integral part of their work, either as accompanists or collaborators. Regional Arts Lottery

Programme funding had enabled one company to second a musician from India for a year; in another, community and gospel choirs had been involved. There was evidence that more companies were either commissioning new music for education projects or involving composers of existing works in the repertoire.

Storytellers had also been used, both as part of a project and as a workshop to help dancers understand the place of narrative in dance. Technicians were frequently employed, both as sound and lighting engineers and as video technicians. Animation techniques had been used in one project.

New technologies had opened up new worlds, which one company was actively embracing, realising its potential not only for providing resource materials but for creating interactive web-cast projects. There was awareness of, but inconsistent spread of knowledge about, how the new technologies might be used to facilitate education programmes in a wide range of contexts. And while companies seemed aware of how broadening the range of collaborators might help to broaden the range of contexts where work takes place, and attract new participants, they seemed unsure of how to proceed in making new partnerships.

Only two companies mentioned broadcasting work on television as part of their education programme, despite the fact that an innovative series featuring newly commissioned works had been screened by two channels with increasingly large audiences. Such transmissions might offer opportunities both for linking education projects to these screenings, or for producing features about the education work itself.

3.5 Target groups

According to the data, work takes place in a variety of settings, real and virtual. As well as schools and day centres, it happens in youth centres and arts centres, and within the community dance context as a whole, in designated dance spaces. Performance work resulting from workshops may be seen in theatres, or be site specific, shown at an Underground station for example, or in a disused warehouse. Work is also promoted through the web, via interactive chat-rooms which promote peer discussion of projects. Companies had a tendency to prefer working within specific target groups, in accordance with education aims; however, despite claims to prioritise, there was still a tendency to try to be all things to all people, with the exception of one company which was most emphatic about only working with the over 25s and performing arts students.

From the evidence provided by this study, the range of target groups across all ten companies included:

- Early Years in nurseries
- parents and toddlers
- primary schools – both dance and cross-curricular, including Personal and Social Education
- secondary schools – GCSE and A-level dance and non arts subjects

- children with special needs
- youth clubs and centres
- youth dance groups
- FE students, e.g. BTEC Performing Arts
- HE students, performing arts, ICT/new media/film and with a South Asian artist, religious studies students
- teachers
- disabled people
- professional dancers.

These specific target groups were subsumed within more general categories: the over 55s, '*the underprivileged*', those excluded from school, those with behaviour problems, boys and young men, intergenerational projects, international projects, young unemployed people, the gay community, the black community, '*our own dance audience*', people who had danced before and people who had not, groups who were already dancing but in a different style, and the audience which attended a 'sharing' of an education project.

Notably absent from this sample is mention of work with young offenders, people in prison, people with mental health problems and work in hospitals and health centres.

3.5.1 Age implications

The observation was made that work in contexts such as family learning groups could be very challenging and was perhaps best carried out by animateurs with experience of work in community dance settings. It was also observed that the over-55s were a difficult group to work with because they had other time commitments and sometimes dropped out of projects. Interestingly, they were also thought to be less creative, and to need more direction than younger people. Generally, the preferred age group of all companies was '*young people*', although this links perhaps with the artistic product being perceived as more relevant to this age group, an emphasis on active participation, and a lack of training in, and understanding of, the needs of older people. One company was moving away from work with primary schools, towards older students, as a direct result of a change in artistic policy, a move which it was hoped would, in time, bear fruit in terms of developing a different audience profile.

3.5.2 Scale

Projects sometimes began on a very large scale. '*Huge*' was used frequently to describe scale of ambition, with work taking place with '*hundreds*' of eager participants. Sometimes a process of elimination was used to whittle the numbers down to manageable proportions. Projects lasted days, weeks or months, while some relationships had been continuing over several years. The issue of exit strategies and lack of consolidation of work was frequently referred to, with an accompanying sense of frustration over the 'hit-and-run' tactics, which seemed unavoidable, being consequences of funding, time, personnel and competing priorities. Retaining and further developing

learning partnerships with participants in education programmes would appear to be a key issue across all the companies, as discussed in previous chapters.

3.6 Examples of projects and how they relate to education aims

Chapter 2 outlined a typology of education aims as described by the dance companies themselves. The following section outlines nine projects, which to a greater or lesser degree reflect these aims. Respondents were asked to describe in detail two particular projects which they had recently taken part in or were aware of. They seemed to choose projects of which they were particularly proud, and which typified the approach to the work, but also those which were considered to be more contentious and complex, perhaps as a way of processing unresolved issues.

All projects appeared to incorporate and implement several different aims. It is also apparent that, in practice, certain aims took priority at particular points in a project's lifespan. While the professed aim, for example, might be 'to enrich lives and provide enjoyment', if the end product was a public performance, then another set of aims might take precedence, before the performance took place.

Most respondents thought that their company's education programmes reflected the education aims to a greater or lesser degree: '*When we are proactive, we fulfil the aims fully; where we are not, then partially, and when we are just doing it to help the touring along, then sort of.*'

But it seemed as if respondents sometimes assessed the projects against a set of individual, internal aims rather than the overarching aims of the company. It might be that unless the education policy is a flexible, 'living' document, collectively shaped and owned by all the stakeholders, and subject to continuous review, then the aims as formally expressed in a policy document become remote aspirations rather than internalised goals. In the absence of a sense of ownership, those leading the project then tend to create and be guided by their own inner beliefs, which are shaped by a variety of sources, such as their training and personal philosophy of dance, which may or may not be in line with the company's official policy.

The broad typology of aims identified in Chapter 2 is as follows:

A. **Integration of artistic and education aims**
B. **Client-centred education aims (proactive and reactive)**
C. **Curriculum development and support (proactive and reactive)**
D. **Dance-centred education aims**
E. **Aims relating to the needs of dance companies**

Projects have been chosen to illustrate where one particular aim seemed to predominate while others were subsidiary. As explained in Chapter 2, in many cases, education aims appeared to be interrelated. It was a striking feature of the work across all companies just how much implementation of the education aims focused on active participation, on participants actually dancing, though there were some dissenting voices:

> *... the fact that someone applauds you for jumping up and down for a while doesn't make you want to do it once it's over. What you have to do is educate the seer – what is he feeling and experiencing through the seeing? I feel this is a fundamental problem with the artform – it has been very performer orientated.*

3.6.1 A. Integration of artistic and education aims

The degree of integration of artistic and education aims will be discussed more fully in Chapter 4, but it was noticeable how many described the process as one of '*opening-out*', of making the company and its processes available to others on many fronts. Sometimes, it was about opening up the process; sometimes, it was demystifying its product, with the intention that '*all the time you are eroding those major separations, trying to find a parity of opportunity – a kind of democratisation*'. Dissolving the boundaries had led one company to reverse the process entirely, by enabling company dancers to perform within a piece made by a youth group: '*... participating inside the performance of the boys. Total integration between the company and the young people*' (artistic director).

An example of a project which appeared to integrate artistic and education aims is offered below:

Example one

A small-scale contemporary dance company led an intensive intergenerational project in an outer London borough with under 10s and over 55s. The project was devised in partnership with a dance agency and, unusually, with Millennium funding. The aims of the Millennium projects were largely to promote community celebration of the arts, while at the same time having a lasting impact on the artistic activity in the area in which they took place. The project was planned by the education officer, led by company dancers and polished for performance by the artistic director, who would '*tweak and change them, taking them to somewhere completely different and then rechoreographing – which is how the company works anyway*'.

The project included taster workshops with a wide range of participants in different dance styles not normally used by the company, for example line dancing, with the aim of making links between their experience and understanding of contemporary dance, narrowing down to a core group, who went on to work on a creative piece with live music, video projection, lighting and costume which was given four public performances. This, as the education officer observed, is one example of several which seemed to integrate the artistic and education programmes: '*It's a part of the main body of work. The same collaborators are used – costume, music, lighting as are used on our touring production work. So in that way it's another piece.*'

This project represents an integration of artistic and education aims, in the sense that it was a process which ran parallel to that of the company in devising work. It could also be seen to meet client-centred aims in acting as a short-term resource to the wider community and to a specific geographic area. To a certain extent, it also met the aim of engaging and enriching the lives of participants. However, because the final piece was a performance which needed to meet the high artistic standards the company had set themselves, a set of aesthetically determined decisions had to be made, not least those of selecting the final performers. This may have meant that the aims of inclusion may have been compromised, in order to promote the needs of the company itself, which saw the project as a way of disseminating its work to a wider audience. In this sense, the aims of audience development were also met, by introducing the form to a new audience in a new context. This company's approach highlights the strategic decisions companies make as projects progress, concerning whose needs to prioritise, in this case the needs of new or existing audiences.

3.6.2 B. Client-centred education aims (proactive)

B1. Aims relating to personal development

It seemed as if everyone liked to feel that all projects incorporated these aims, which were very important to some of the respondents and linked with the 'feelgood' and enjoyment factors described in Chapter 2. Some projects fulfilled a need for self-expression which went far beyond the dance content to include: '*our characters, our experience, the roads we've travelled*'. The following example is one of many in which these aims were significant.

Example two

A company which performed in a non-western style with an extensive, if not to say exhausting, schedule of education work offered a week of workshops in primary schools, developing a piece with the children for performance at the end of the week to other classes and, occasionally, parents. Musicians were central to every aspect of the creative process. The project was always led by the artistic director, who seemed to have a particularly well-developed belief in the impact of dance on personal and even spiritual development. When asked what was distinctive about the work, the artist replied: '*We're innovative, inventive and spiritually we touch people's hearts with our work. We make people feel good about themselves.*'

The workshops were in great demand – in fact demand exceeded the capacity to provide. Everyone interviewed in this company spoke about the commitment, charisma and capability of the artistic director and of the impact on some very '*difficult*' pupils, particularly boys. A group of boys was said to have gained in concentration, commitment and pride, through practising and perfecting a task in an activity which had not previously held appeal; significantly, this had taken place in schools where dance teaching was of low priority.

It would seem that while this work principally met the aims relating to personal development, it also fulfilled both proactive client-centred aims

relating to cultural diversity and social inclusion, and reactive client-centred aims as a sensitive response to the needs of a specific target group. The project could also be seen to tackle wider social issues, such as challenging prevailing attitudes to masculinity.

This project did not particularly meet educational aims associated with providing a resource for curriculum development – at least not for dance – because an introduction to a different culture was equally important here. And while the pupils performed themselves, they did not automatically see a performance by the company as a conclusion to the project. It was acknowledged that the work with children had at times been a method of trying out ideas for later incorporation in new works performed by the company, thus meeting an artistic aim, and there was the feeling that, without the education work, the creativity of this artist might be diminished. He enjoyed it and it nourished his work to a marked degree. Here, too, education work was essential to the survival of the company, which is why there was so much of it, both in terms of raising income and in building an appreciation of this particular genre, attempting to lead audiences away from the more traditional presentations of this style of dance towards something more creative, evolving from its cultural roots.

B2. Aims relating to the community

The next company, for whom education seemed to be its *raison d'être,* with a marked degree of integration of artistic and education aims, had arrived at their position on the dance spectrum through a rather different route. The dancers had graduated through the state school curriculum, rather than undergoing vocational training, and had founded a company infused with the twin missions of bringing dance to the wider community and of acting as a resource to particular communities which were seen to be socially excluded. They believed that remaining firmly in what a dancer in another company described as '*the real world*' had had a particularly beneficial effect on both their approach to the education work and to the artistic content of their performances.

Example three

At the inauguration of the company, they had set up a programme targeting boys and young men, particularly those who were perceived by the company to be marginalised and disaffected. The project began in South London by showing videos of the company, followed by a demonstration by the company itself but for boys alone, a 'softly softly' approach which developed into the boys working alongside the company on stage and then, eventually, accommodating girls on to the scheme. A pilot project led to a national programme and determined the ethos of other projects by this company. A loose affiliation or network of boys' groups had emerged so that in theory the company could go back and continue their involvement, although in practice it was not clear to what extent this was happening, or what the determinants of continuation were. Some of the boys involved in the ongoing scheme had themselves gone on to vocational training and eventual employment in dance.

While strongly meeting proactive client-centred aims, by acting as a resource to a wider community, particularly in terms of exploring issues surrounding cultural diversity and social inclusion, this project also met reactive client-centred aims in responding to the individual needs of young people by addressing work with boys and men and correcting a perceived gender imbalance within dance practice. In essence, the project represented a parallel process to the development of the company itself, in that those hitherto seen as marginalised and disempowered, not part of mainstream contemporary dance, had found a new route through to promoting a particular cultural form, thus raising self-esteem amongst the dancers themselves and invigorating the broader field of dance. It also contributed to the survival of dance itself because this project was seen as the tool for achieving larger ambitions for the artform through developing black dance generally in all its richness and variety, making it more central to contemporary culture and promoting a particular aspect of black dance linked to popular music forms.

3.6.3 B. Client-centred education aims (reactive)

A further example of a project with young men and boys can be cited:

Example four

This project was provided by a middle-scale contemporary dance company known for its theatrical, gestural, highly visual style of production. It was initiated at the suggestion of the dance officer of an RAB, who brokered a partnership with a local dance agency, in the region where the company regularly toured. The idea was to link dance and football. Two dancers from the company worked with 700 people aged 12–16 across schools and football clubs, including young people who had been excluded from school. Another dancer made a video recording of the project which was later screened on national television. The choreography of this company was felt to lend itself particularly well to work with these groups, and the dancers had expressed interest in working with boys. The final performance took place on a professional football club pitch. Most of the young people then had follow-up in the form of repertoire-based workshops with company dancers before seeing a performance by the company. It was hoped that follow-up work would involve these groups seeing the company's next new show.

This is an interesting example of the suggestion that a project's aims change and evolve throughout its life, meeting different needs at different times. This project began life as a project with strong reactive, client-centred aims, at least structurally, with the proactive aim of working with boys. During the process of the education work itself, personal development aims then came to the fore, in terms of offering opportunities for social interaction and teamwork across a large scale. Eventually, however, aims relating to the company's needs again came to predominate. For example, the project, to some extent, met the aim of stretching dancers by using experience of education work as part of professional development – the making of the video being an intrinsic part of the project. And the central education aim for this company was to develop audiences for its performances. So to refocus the aims in order that they became less about dance *per se*, and

more about offering an experience of dance as performed by that particular company, was entirely consistent. Nevertheless, it raises questions about the responsibility other agencies might need to take for continuing access to a broad range of dance experiences for groups such as this. In offering a different way of working with boys and young men from that outlined in Example three, it invites debate about the different methods of approaching work with this target group; about whether positive discrimination is in itself desirable and in accordance with practice in the educational mainstream; and even about representations of masculinity itself, within dance and amongst dancers.

The next example of a project predominantly reflecting client-centred aims is more reactive than the last and seems to have a built-in capacity for continuing to be reactive, in terms of needing to be responsive to the needs of the participants, as the project progresses.

Example five

This company had recently re-formed after a break. It had been approached by a regional dance agency and asked to lead a project with those aged 17 and over. It was to take place within ten boroughs of a large metropolitan authority with Arts for Everyone funding. It would include disabled and non-disabled people in day centres and adult community groups, one youth group and some elders, culminating in a performance on stage by the group of a newly choreographed piece as part of the main performance programme – a first for this company.

Not only did this project appear to have the potential for achieving considerable integration of artistic and education aims of the company, but it tied in with some key overall aims for the geographic area, namely widening access to a new venue with a remit to develop audiences across a wide community base, and also that of involving '*as many disabled people as possible in a series of dance projects*'.

The company would be performing two newly commissioned works by professional choreographers. It was being reactive in taking the risk that the piece developed within the community would be a good '*fit*' with the rest of the programme.

3.6.4 C. Curriculum development and support (proactive and reactive)

It would appear that the symbiotic relationship that once existed between dance companies and schools, which was established in the early days of dance companies providing education programmes, is proving hard to sustain. In order not to become 'stuck' in the role of either servicing preparation for examination purposes, or of offering a tokenistic contribution to maintaining the profile of the arts generally within schools, it seems from the evidence here that there might be room for discussion on how dance companies can review and redefine their potential contribution to this sector.

Projects in which curriculum development aims predominated were structured so as to be both proactive and reactive to the needs of schools and teachers alongside pupils, through offering specific curriculum support by:

- supporting the teaching of dance within the National Curriculum – here, there was a bias towards work at secondary level, with less in primary schools;
- offering a dance dimension to a cross-curricular project, mostly by employing companies of cultural diversity; and
- offering an experience of dance as part of an intention towards providing a general 'one-off' experience of the arts within schools, i.e. as part of an 'arts week'.

Work with teachers generally was somewhat tacked-on, or haphazard, with no particular ways of ensuring that teachers participated in programmes their pupils were engaged in, in ways that were appropriate to them. In planning, discussions tended to be at the level of the individual teacher, rather than with advisory teachers, curriculum support teams or policy makers, perhaps because this infrastructure has become increasingly hard to access.

There was little evidence of work with teachers in developing general appreciation of dance, or in supporting teachers' professional development needs in ways not directly related to delivering the National Curriculum. This might be an area for further development.

Example six

Example six concerns a schools workshop programme which had been run by a middle-scale contemporary company for over 20 years. The target group was 12 years and upwards incorporating schools, sixth-form colleges, FE and HE students. Although aimed at specialist and non-specialist dance students, it was usually taken up by secondary school dance students studying works which are in the company's repertoire. Animateurs facilitated the programme, offering a workshop consisting of a warm-up, learning an extract from a work to be performed by the company, with occasionally some creative work, often developing themes taken from works in the repertoire. Approximately 90 per cent of the participants then came to see a performance, usually in the same week as the workshop. Supporting materials were provided for teachers, who usually took part in the workshops and accompanied the students to the performance.

Here, although curriculum development aims ostensibly predominated, in supporting dance teaching and teachers, in fact, once again, aims relating to the needs of dance companies were also to the fore, ensuring the survival of the company and its core repertoire, raising the company's profile, with perhaps the longer-term aim of building audiences.

The next example of work with schools concerns a South Asian artist, originally a performer of a classical style, now increasingly moving towards work in solely educational contexts, firstly, because of dwindling audiences

for the 'pure' form and, secondly, because of the success and satisfaction gained from work with schools.

Example seven

Working with a composer, a storyteller and a musician using masks, music, dance and narrative, the company presented an ancient Indian tale. There were two versions of this production: one for adults and one for children – four-year-olds. Both tackled issues of power and violence, thus contributing a perspective on these issues applicable across the curriculum.

Here curriculum development aims predominated in supporting various aspects of the National Curriculum, and the project also fulfilled aims relating to the community and to personal development. But yet again, aims associated with the company's survival, developing appreciation of the company's particular style, here culturally specific, are conspicuous.

This company's work raises questions about the extent to which work of cultural diversity meets broader curriculum needs, perhaps to the detriment of its contribution as pure dance, or whether the two are, in fact, inseparable. Discussion of this raises the question as to whether other dance companies could provide input across the whole curriculum. Across companies generally, there was little evidence of work in schools across artforms and in collaboration with visual artists, sculptors, writers and broadcasters, despite the fact that there was access to them and their networks through commissions for the core programme and the fact that dance, above all, is a composite form using narrative, music, design, video and voice in an integrated way. This might be a reflection of where dance is placed within the National Curriculum – within PE – making cross-curricular work more difficult.

3.6.5 D. Dance-centred education aims

Realising these aims usually meant providing pre-performance talks, sessions with dance and performing arts students (occasionally led by the artistic director) and summer schools. An interesting feature of all education work is the impact it has had on the dance community itself. In some cases, the work has resulted in the creation of small companies which themselves perform in community contexts, and in others, the work has challenged practice, for example, by questioning the availability of training routes open to disabled dancers.

Example eight

A company specialising in work with dancers of all abilities organised an intensive summer weekend workshop at the company's base. Fifty students came from all over the world to develop ideas with relation to the practice and performance of integrated dance. Although there was no pressure to create performance pieces, there was an informal showing of the work, which was described as '*outstanding*'. The course included a seminar on the future of work of this kind, particularly in exploring where disabled people can go on to train, with input from colleges which run courses for people of all abilities.

In this instance, while the project addressed dance-centred aims, particularly in terms of providing creative opportunities, it also incorporated aims relating to the needs of dance companies themselves.

3.6.6 E. Aims relating to the needs of dance companies

It has by now become apparent that this group of aims pervades nearly all of the education programmes described by the companies. In considering how to meet the needs of the profession more specifically, most companies, for example, had at some time provided programmes for other professional dancers, usually leading one-day workshops as part of a professional support programme.

There are indications that some companies would like to '*raise a discussion of choreographic practice and the construction of meaning*' (artistic director) by developing special projects. Some expressed the need for there to be a discussion and analysis of choreographic practice by choreographers themselves with their peers, at the highest level of practice, of which the following is an example.

Example nine

A week-long project led by the artistic director of a small-scale contemporary company was planned, but had not yet taken place. It aimed to involve professional choreographers in a dance '*laboratory*' experiment, which would ask them to make sections of work to be performed for an audience, while a psychologist and others would attempt to explore with the audience and artists what meanings they attached to movements and gestures and how they interpreted meaning, perhaps by relating it to past experience.

This project had the short-term aims of supporting the development of dance and providing creative opportunities for choreographers. It also offered an intellectually stimulating experience for dancers across several companies. However, longer term, it might also contribute to the survival of the company in that if an insight could be acquired into how audiences attached meaning to an experience of dance, work could theoretically be devised which would meet those expectations and provide a more satisfying and relevant experience. There are possible connections to be made here with findings about how dance is experienced by pupils in schools as outlined in *Arts Education in Secondary Schools: Effects and Effectiveness* (Harland *et al.*, 2000).

3.6.7 Summary

It would seem that most if not all of the education projects cited by respondents in this study had the underlying aim of perpetuating the development, and raising the profile, of dance in general, and of individual genres in particular, by building and developing the audiences for the individual companies. Without this endeavour, there was a feeling that their very survival would in some way be seem to be imperilled. But curiously, there was very little work initiated by the dance companies

themselves, in collaboration with others, either dance companies, policy makers or partners, which aimed to reflect on practice. There was little evidence of moves which would engender peer appraisal or encourage critical debate about the educational programmes, or raise questions about the place and function of dance in contemporary society, with reference to education and the community. In this sense, their position could be described as somewhat reactive, if not to say passive.

All but one of the companies were seen to be led by a strong, singular artistic director, whose vision influenced the artistic policy and, to a more variable degree, the education programme. The exception was a company which was more closely knit, acting as more of a cooperative, with interchangeable roles. Interestingly, it was the only company which could be said to have the principal aim of putting the needs of the communities it served before those of the company itself. In other words, aims relating directly to the needs of the companies themselves were less in evidence. A subject for further investigation might be to explore the extent to which such an ethos eventually affects the artistic product: whether in fact education activity which puts the needs of the participants at its heart enhances or diminishes its creative development.

3.7 Relationship of aims to availability of funding

It was a curious feature of this research that, when asked about how projects were funded, responses were usually vague, even dismissive, ranging from: '*Oh God – I can't remember the exact figure!*' to admitting being a '*bit hazy*' or a '*bit blank*'. This response is perhaps understandable from dancers, who may be placed some way from the budgets, but is curious when applied to managers. It seems as if something else might be going on here beyond affected disinterest. Perhaps this 'forgetfulness' reflects the separation of education from the main business of the company, where financial issues are less important than fulfilling aims and objectives. In this interpretation, either education is so valuable that they can't remember how much it costs because money isn't an issue, or it is so unimportant that the bottom line isn't worth remembering.

Almost everyone declared that they would do more education work if more money was available. Funding which was built into core budgets and designated for the education programme allowed freedom to be proactive in initiating projects and targeting them more selectively. Conversely, having to go out and work up funding enabled some interesting partnerships to be forged, with the ensuing challenge of balancing multiple interests. Most companies were not prepared to *jump through hoops* in order to raise money for projects they did not believe in:

> *They say 'Why don't you apply for this RALP* [Regional Arts Lottery Programme] *and then you could do this education project?' and we have to say 'Why are we doing it? Is it about audience development?' Because if it isn't we won't do it, because otherwise we'd end up doing a million things and that's not what we're funded to do.*

Funding for projects described by respondents had been obtained from the following sources (in no particular order):

- designated amounts within core budgets
- Arts Council of England projects and schemes, such as Audience Development
- Regional Arts Lottery Programme
- Millennium Fund
- dance agencies' budgets
- festivals
- schools (core not PTA funds)
- LEAs
- local authority arts budgets
- Regional Arts Boards
- Arts for Everyone
- trusts and foundations
- business sponsorship.

The general perception was that money from commercial sponsorship had all but dried up. There was little evidence in this sample that either Adult Education, Health, Social Services, Prison or Probation Services had been accessed for funding in any significant way.

3.8 Content and teaching methods

Mostly, the process mirrored the company's own work processes: technique class, choreographing a new work, rehearsal, staging and performance. It was notable that practice was shaped by ancestral voices: '*Fortunately for me we used to have Bob Cohan at the time and I used to go and teach on tour and he used to come and watch us teach and we used to go back and talk about what we did and what we didn't do. He basically taught us how to go about teaching – especially young people.*' The speaker here is a mature teacher who had trained some of the younger dancers in this study. Devising a family tree, showing how the older dancers in this study might have influenced the work, artistic and educational, of the younger, would be an interesting exercise.

Technique class

Some felt that if the ethos was access, then teaching formal technique was inappropriate; what was needed was a 'warm-up' to get people generally dancing and moving. Others taught technique in the style appropriate to their own practice, but adapting it to cater for mixed ability and experience. The warm-up could be creative too: '*I'm very adaptable but I use them; I*

use the warm-up exercises to get their ideas.' There was evidence that dancers were conscientious and imaginative in preparing sessions and responsible in delivering formulae:

> *Sometimes, it's good to just stick to the same format for a while and see how it applies to different groups so that you are actually on top of the material and you can work more with the individuals and adapt more. If the material and structure is always new to yourself, it's very hard to respond to the people you are working with.*

Choreographing a new work

This could mean taking a motif from a work in the company repertoire, developing it into themes which could be pieced together to make a new work based on the old, or using original motifs to create an entirely new piece. This was thought to be a useful way of working in terms of giving an insight into the professional process as rehearsals transmute into performances and the finished piece and into how collaboration works: '*What I do as a choreographer is what I do when I teach students so that when they see the work they can see where it's coming from.*'

Sometimes, works were chosen because they had elements that would be of immediate appeal, such as salsa; at other times, it was those that were on the examination syllabus. Sometimes the work was devised specially as a commission for a context, for example a carnival or festival, again mirroring the company's core activity. Sometimes, work was based on a theme, such as a story or, in the case of very young children, a nursery rhyme. Themes were also chosen with relevance to the ages and interest of the participants: football, skate-boarding, roller-blading and graffiti art were cited as examples.

Dancer as educator

This might be described as the 'hidden curriculum' of work in schools and the community. What messages does a dancer transmit about him/herself and his/her company in a workshop? How do they value dance? What are the basic assumptions held by the students before work begins? How are these changed by the way the dancer leads the session, the material s/he chooses to use and, more importantly, the language – both verbal and of the body – that s/he uses to transmit ideas? This research answers these questions only tangentially, but they are of importance to the development of practice. Dancers are considered to be ambassadors, for the form as a whole, a particular style, or for an individual company, its ethos and heritage. For the participant, contact with the professional dancer was seen as part of a two-way process which was paradoxically both demystifying and mysterious: '*I worked with that person up there – I had a conversation with them. The older you get in the dance world, the easier it is to forget that we all need that inspiration.*'

While some dancers can meet this challenge, others find it more difficult. Within one large organisation:

> *... there's a certain boundary seen to exist between dancers and the education work in that dancers become dancers to be professional dancers so it's hard for them to understand because they're not trained in education work.*

While in another:

> *... a lot of dancers aren't necessarily teachers. It's a whole different ball game. It's about how they hold themselves – how they work with other people, communicating verbally as well as physically – knowing how to interact with young people.*

For others still, perhaps as a result of their vocational training:

> *... their perception of what I see as the real world out there is very, very, limited, because their experience is limited, and they are patronised in such a way that it keeps them there. They don't question. They are not encouraged to question.*

And this might also mean they don't automatically put themselves forward to work in education contexts unless specific professional development schemes are made available.

Teaching techniques can be acquired by a variety of means. The key question for the companies here seemed to be how to work effectively in a variety of contexts without compromising what was seen to be the most useful thing an artist had to offer – their skill, commitment, inspiration and artistic integrity.

3.9 Evaluation

All the companies expressed commitment to and appreciation of the importance of evaluation: '*If it's just a token thing in order to tick off "OK, we've done that", then it's not going anywhere, no learning is involved, it's just something that happened.*'

A number of methods were used to evaluate work:

- standard format evaluation forms with tick-boxes completed after the event by all participants including the artists
- informal feedback – conversations with participants, perhaps over the phone or during the interval
- letters and pictures from children
- informal discussion groups or debriefings
- informal ongoing discussion amongst the dancers of their work and the work of others
- self-evaluation of performance in workshop contexts

- video or vox pop feedback
- through internet access via chat-rooms
- participants writing a response to the work, which in itself is a work of art,
- a poem or story, for example.

The observation was made that there was little external evaluation of the work: '*We have never had external evaluation – no one has ever come in and questioned what we've done.*' And if there was external evaluation, for example, feedback didn't always filter back to the dancers: '*I've not read any evaluations – I'm told "Oh, this is good" but I don't get to read it personally.*' There was perhaps a feeling that external validation would act as important acknowledgement of, and add validity to, what was often important, ground-breaking work.

The notion of building evaluation into a budget, so that dancers could be paid to attend a meeting with the participants post-project was mooted: '*Sometimes maybe having an extra session with participants after they have done the sharing or performance, sometimes that can be important in rounding it off, so I think that we will all be thoughtful about how that happens.*' It was further suggested that it would be important to move beyond the anecdotal – '*Oh it was fantastic!*' – and towards some really objective hard evidence which was '*not critical of the work but critical of your processes to improve practice*', and eventually, presumably, policy.

3.9.1 Uses of evaluation

Evaluation was declared to be useful in:

- informing future planning
- as an ongoing process which ironed out difficulties encountered during a project
- acting as leverage to raise further funding
- keeping track of individual teaching methods
- keeping track of individual performance with reference to professional development
- helping the organisation to learn from its mistakes
- allowing a refinement of working methods
- helping to recognise the gap between ambition and outcome.

A succinct account of how evaluation influenced future work was: '*If it's good, we do some more; if it's bad, we don't*'; while another respondent recognised that the evaluation didn't end with the project: '*I think true evaluation only ever happens when there's a longer-term, two-way relationship.*'

In applying the typology of stated education aims to the profiles of companies' actual projects under discussion here, the most frequently occurring aims concerned the survival of the dance companies themselves. Very rarely were the needs of the participants, or of a particular community, consistently placed at the forefront of policy or planning. Companies cited the following as contributory factors: a history of chronic underfunding; the volatility of the sector, with companies forming and re-forming; and perhaps, most insistently, the difficulties of developing and sustaining audiences, while at the same time being artistically at the cutting edge.

The following chapter will now examine the views of company members on the relationship between companies' education programmes and their core artistic work.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COMPANY'S EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND ITS CORE ACTIVITIES

4.1 Overview

This was a difficult chapter to write: at times it seems as if there were as many different interpretations of the key concepts of 'education' and 'core activity' as there were individual respondents, while at others there seemed an extraordinary convergence of opinion between all the respondents. It should also be noted that, in asking to what extent the educational programmes reflected the artistic mission, respondents sometimes inferred that the researcher thought this to be a good thing, and this may have affected their responses.

This chapter aims to explore the relationship between the company's education programme and its other activities. In doing so, it first seemed necessary to take a step back and describe the context in which the companies described themselves as operating. Such a context appears to be closely associated with the predominance of aims relating to the needs and survival of dance companies, discussed in the previous chapter.

In essence, while there was considerable convergence of opinion over what the artistic aims of the company were felt to be, the perception of what education means, in considering its relationship to other areas of work, was largely dependent on personal experience. What seemed to be the glue that held everything together was a strongly held and shared belief across all sectors of the companies that dance itself was a 'good thing' and fundamental to human experience. All the education programmes were underpinned by this belief and, notwithstanding the different degree of integration, real and perceived, of artistic and education activity, and the occasional conflicts and rifts which appeared, this belief ensured the continuation of the companies' education work. In a sense, all the educational activity represented an acting out of this belief in different ways and at different times with different groups. It was as if one group believed it had insight into something which is life-enhancing, and set out to share it with others.

The belief in the value of dance was strongly linked to the drive towards artistic expression, and artistic autonomy, the essential creative endeavour. In interpreting the findings of this study, it would be important to take account

of that drive, and also the diversity of understanding about certain key concepts. However, the strongly shared beliefs in the value of dance might form the basis of establishing productive dialogue both across the companies and with the various partners with whom they work.

4.2 Context

While this is not the place to explore the development and characteristics of the dance 'psyche' in Britain, it *is* pertinent to note that dance is a relatively new artform. While classical Asian and African genres have ancient roots, classical ballet and contemporary dance are relatively new performance styles, and post-modern forms are obviously and inevitably continually evolving. According to this study, practitioners of Asian and African dance currently feel an obligation to adapt or develop artistically, cross-fertilising with other dance styles. Practitioners of classical ballet feel compelled both to retain the traditional, classical and narrative-based repertoire, and at the same time to push forward the boundaries of the form. And although it may take artistic inspiration from it, the dance of these companies takes place aesthetically and operationally apart from what might be described as 'everyday dance' – the popular and social forms. This may be leading some companies to perceive themselves as separate from mainstream culture, and to perceive education as one of the possible solutions to bridging the gap.

Without elaborating on the history of dance-in-education, it *is* worth remembering that there has always been an obligation placed upon the contemporary companies to explain themselves at the same time as they were creating themselves. The education programme which ran parallel to the main artistic programme of London Contemporary Dance Theatre in the late '60s and early '70s is an example of this. Several of the participants referred to what seemed to be a crisis in contemporary dance itself, with its core audience dwindling:

> *A company like this is slowly but surely being scraped away, it's disappearing and it's all because there's not enough people coming. It stems from the very baseline of all the younger people knowing about it and being involved in it. If it's because it's really boring and nobody likes it and no one wants to come and see it, fine – but I don't think it's that. I think it's something to do with ignorance.*

Similarly, African and South Asian dance was little known or practised in Britain before the 1950s (with exceptions which it is not useful to explore here). An education programme linked to performance was almost inescapable, as a means of explaining elements of what was, for many, an unprecedented artistic experience. For one artistic director, survival was about struggling to maintain the legitimacy of his/her particular means of expression in relation to many others:

> *I'm sorry but it's doomed. I don't want to blame anyone. I want them to believe in this form of dance as with ballet, jazz and tap – that this is important as well. I'm trying both to revive its importance in this country – for people to understand it and to move on from whatever they used to do before.*

Lastly, as an example of the need for companies to be promoting themselves at the same time as inventing themselves, the structures within the dance world itself are somewhat volatile: companies disappear and reappear, dancers move from one to another and the content itself is subject to, at times, quite startling redefinition. As an example of this, one of the company administrators described how the artistic director worked in turn with two different sections of the company and on different scales. The outcome of this approach was that: '*... the audience development is lost. People say "We came to see you in Newcastle and you haven't been here for three years". But we haven't a show that will fit that venue.*'

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that some dance companies feel the pressures accompanying the reinventing, promoting and explaining themselves, and have adopted complex, and sometimes ambivalent, attitudes towards their education work. It would not be an exaggeration to say that a sense of insecurity about the future was prevalent amongst many of the companies, manifesting itself in defensiveness, sometimes about the purpose of the research itself. This seems to have something to do with the volatile context within which the dance companies operate and the tension inherent in respecting the past while engaging with the future.

4.3 What is meant by 'core activity'?

Essentially, the artistic endeavour was seen by all the companies to be about taking high-quality, innovative work to as many people as possible. Responses to a question inviting respondents to give their own view of the company's artistic mission can be categorised as follows:

For the audience

- To produce accessible work for as wide an audience as possible.
- To transcend individual artform, perceptual and conceptual boundaries, in giving audiences particular insights and experiences summarised as 'a sense of another world' or else a different way of seeing the world.
- To create work which enables the audience to make connections with other artforms.
- To communicate ideas which have meaning for the audience and relate to their own experiences.
- To create awareness of dance of different cultures.

For the company itself

- To create a stimulating and challenging environment for artists.
- To communicate the individual vision of the artistic director, or of a particular choreographer.
- To influence the practice and development of the form itself by producing innovative, high-quality work.
- To be challenging, subversive and provocative in creating new work.
- To integrate disabled and non-disabled dancers into mainstream dance practice.
- To sustain and develop particular cultural forms.
- To retain respect for tradition and existing work.

From this, it is clear that most of the aims relate to artistic creation and reflect the needs of the form and the company itself. In considering the needs of the audience, only one aim refers to an attempt to enable the audience to make links with their own experience. Mostly, the starting point seems to be that the audience lacks something, the experience of dance in performance, which the company endeavours to supply.

4.4 What is dance for?

Compare the views expressed above with the beliefs about what dance is for. When asked about the distinctive contribution dance can make to education, it was widely agreed that dance represents a coming together of mind and body: a conjoining of the physical, emotional and intellectual. It was felt important that this was a shared experience, a collaborative activity, and that it took place, not only as part of a wider cultural and aesthetic context, but with an almost spiritual sense of being part of something larger than oneself. Dancing was felt to enhance self-awareness and offer increased capacity for self-expression. This led to greater self-confidence, with the capacity to be more challenging, more assertive. If the overriding artistic aim of the companies could be said to be about challenging perceived aesthetic and cultural boundaries – a kind of disintegration – then the central aim for the individual was essentially about integration of the mind and the body in which, according to one dancer, '*you are confronted with yourself, working with what you've got and adapting to those limitations, working within boundaries*'.

4.5 Relationship between the education programmes and the core activity

The question of whether the education aims reflected the artistic aims was interpreted as meaning to what extent what took place in the education workshops incorporated the repertoire or reflected what took place on stage. Most respondents thought that it did; some cited incidents where the touring repertoire had been tailored to meet the needs of an educational programme where '*the education element was always kept in mind*'. Others, however, referred to occasions where the artistic programme was not considered suitable for use in such situations, when it was felt no compromise should be made: '*I could never see the point of tailoring the workshop to please everyone because it should reflect what you do. I think it's patronising to say "Oh yes, we'll adapt our work to everyone". I don't think you should. You have to stand up for your art*' (dancer).

Elsewhere, others thought it was desirable for the education programme to have a separate life and entity of its own and that it could be artistically divergent from the company's own repertoire:

> *I think in this company, educational ideas are activated depending on what the company is doing. For example, we did a full-length piece and then a project with hundreds of people based on that piece. That is where I am in disagreement; I don't believe it has to revolve around the company's work.*

The rationale for thinking it undesirable that the workshops draw upon the repertoire was because it was in a sense misrepresentational:

> *... taking a piece out and saying 'This is what we do' is not the be all and end all of what we do. I think there are other elements about the company that could possibly, if they were done in the right way, be educational.*

4.5.1 Approaches to integration

One company was moving away from performance, intending to focus solely on education work, largely in response from demand from schools and the fact that the artistic director enjoyed the work and was thought to be good at it. Another worked extensively in community contexts, and many of its productions were derived from material arising out of educational work, with participants taking part alongside company members. The education work was inseparable from the artistic programme: they '*were one and the same*'. A third example within this category is the company which gave performances and also ran an extensive educational programme, achieving a marked degree of integration of education and artistic aims. The dancers accepted that it was an integral part of their work, and there was an induction and support programme for the whole company. There seemed to be little conflict of aims, and they had responded to the heavy demand for the work by creating a separate pool of freelance artists to augment the work who were former dancers of the company and who understood both their artistic and education aims.

By contrast, a fourth company, which did very little education work because the artistic director found the work '*too distracting and draining*', nevertheless achieved convergence of education and artistic aims in strictly limited terms. The ethos of the company centred around the autonomy of the artist: '*the freedom of the artist is absolutely to be cherished*'. The programme was led by the artistic director himself, to groups who would see the performance, and both enterprises aimed to be similarly confrontational and stimulating, challenging the assumptions of the audience.

Other companies seemed to move in and out of achieving integration. Education projects reflected the core artistic aims to a variable degree depending on a number of factors: the current repertoire, the company's annual schedule, the funding available for the work, the partnerships which were made, the availability and attitudes of the personnel facilitating them and whether the company was in a proactive or reactive phase.

Two companies in particular presented interesting examples: one was deliberately striving towards greater integration of education and artistic aims, while the other seemed to be somewhat split, even unaware of the perceived relationship between the two arms – education and artistic – of its operation.

Example one

The first company had recently renegotiated its approach, with the effect that the artistic and education policies were now being combined under one 'cultural policy' and personnel previously resistant to the notion of education work were changing attitudes. Such a paradigm shift had been initiated by the artistic director, leading a senior management team which included the education officer and a particularly dynamic and informed Board member. This company was exploring ways of making its developing artistic programme integral to the needs of new target groups for education work, while at the same time continuing to serve the needs of its existing constituency. The development seemed to result from the vision of the artistic director, who when asked to describe the effect the education programmes had on other areas of his work replied:

> *... it's so embedded in everything we do, that at a philosophical level, and also at a practical level now, it doesn't affect me noticeably, because it affects me totally. It isn't something which I could say, 'Oh, it made me feel good that day, or that week', because it's ongoing.*

For their education officer, integration depended on making the dancers aware of the benefits to the company artistically:

> *... what I am trying to do, and what is most urgent, is how to make education really reflect the artistic vision of the company; and I think the way to do that is to get the company dancers involved in delivering it. The company hasn't yet realised what this work can do for the dancers, how it can feed their performances and their work within the company.*

Example two

The administrator of this building-based company with an extensive touring commitment described its predicament as follows:

> *... there is always tension between the principal and overriding artistic objective – rehearsing works and getting the performance on – and anything which encroaches on that, and that doesn't only include education; it can be fundraising and things like that.*

This company appeared to be not only very traditional in its hierarchical structure and arms-length Board of management, but also appeared 'split', with the performing team on one side and the education on the other across an often insuperable barrier. Although both had played a significant role in devising and facilitating education projects, neither was felt to appreciate the purpose of the other, with the result that education work had become markedly separated from the main company, perhaps even lacking in focus. It was even seen to be physically separate: 'it's kind of its own separate little entity attached to the side of this building', as a company dancer observed. And according to this same dancer, who was heavily involved in and committed to the company's education programme:

> *... there's not a lot of talking goes on, I know that. We don't know what the education department is doing; they are often unsure what we are doing. It's not a very talking building, this.*

And yet everyone in this company seemed to be fully committed to the idea of education, and spoke in an impassioned way about its value and the positive impact on participants and the company itself. The problems here seemed structural and functional, rather than attitudinal.

4.6 Barriers to integration

4.6.1 Structural

Summoning up the will to overcome barriers means first identifying what they are. Sometimes, the barriers were structural, relating to where the education office was sited, limiting understanding across the organisation about what goes on behind the mysterious door marked 'education'. Others were interpersonal, such as establishing communication with those with responsibility for releasing dancers from rehearsals and the conventions of inter-departmental meetings. It is perhaps no accident that the smaller ensembles with more informal means of communication seemed to be able to integrate some of the artistic aims with some of the education aims with greater ease, so that the two arms of the organisation could operate more closely together.

It seemed that there *was* a difference between building-based companies, with large resources at their disposal, and the smaller, more itinerant ensembles. Paradoxically, while the work of the former was more repertoire

based, perhaps more geared towards preserving the organisation and its heritage, the fixed structures which had developed to maintain the organisation meant that there was less flexibility of approach to education work, and despite the greater numbers of dancers at its disposal, a far greater reliance on freelancers to deliver the work.

4.6.2 Differing perceptions of 'education'

Within all the companies there were different perceptions of what constituted 'education', and this was often determined by the individual's own experience of the process. For those who had undergone full-time vocational training in dance, often from an early age, it was often harder to see the purpose of engaging in work in the wider community or to feel that your contribution might be valuable. It was said that these dancers felt they were there '*to do a job, and that job is performing and anything outside that they don't want to know, so you tend to keep quiet and do what you do and if you have an opinion you won't say anything*'.

Then there were the different often negative associations attached to the word 'education' itself, as described by one Board member:

> *I think for a lot of professional artists ... education is the very thing they have been trying to get away from. They didn't quite fit in at school, they didn't like it and so the idea of going back to it doesn't thrill them. They want to be dancers.*

If their induction to the process had been an inadequate or negative experience, this could also colour perceptions. Here is a dancer describing the experience of '*cold-calling*' in a youth club:

> *You just had to sort of peddle your wares and I found those quite hard because you had to go in and be larger than life and try and get people enthused. I found it a bit frustrating. There were all these kids running around and you might get six interested and then three would give up and three would really enjoy it and say, 'When are you coming back?' I found it really hard.*

And then there was the perception that 'education' mostly meant 'schools':

> *I think the word 'education' is a massive issue. If there was a better word, we would all be using it! As soon as you say 'education', people think formal education, they think schools, and I think one of the messages I want to get across here is education is not just about schools, it's about young people outside school, and it's also about adults. I suppose it's this lifelong learning thing. We have to start taking a much broader definition of what education is.*

One Board member expressed the wish for a much broader definition of 'education', one which encompassed the performing role as being educative in itself:

There are times when the funding system is so tied up with what they are doing that they forget about why an artist or company is doing what they are doing, and education can be an absolutely integral part of that. And that's what bothers me ... it's always about the residency, workshop, etc. and I don't think it's enough about the motivation of the artists doing it and when they are at their communicative best. When are the moments when you can genuinely change a child's life, or give an adult an experience they will never forget? And the definition of that is tricky ...

4.6.3 What is meant by 'audience'?

The degree of integration of education aims with artistic policy and practice was often determined by companies' perceptions of what constituted an audience, and the degree and type of contact it had with that audience. Communication with the audience could be restricted solely to that of presenting a performance:

... the minimum amount of contact that a company can have with the audience is not to have any beyond that the audience turns up at 7.30, pays for its ticket on the door, they come in, watch the performance, curtain down, they go out.

But among the companies here, some individuals were determined to achieve a much closer relationship, which would enhance the relevance of the performance for the audience both as individuals and collectively, in cultural terms. In his approach to audience development, one artistic director recognised the predominantly individual response to new media amongst young people, while still embracing both the individual and collective arms of the audience experience:

I think increasingly we're offered new opportunities where the one-to-oneness of new technology provides something which is about customised opportunities to intervene with content ... audiences are no longer this kind of generic mob that are just going to the theatre; they're something other than that. So, if we're thinking about that, we need to find strategies which allow and facilitate that one-to-oneness of the individual – getting more people to actually experience live work in a more plural approach.

Companies which had adopted '*a more plural approach*' had realised that the term 'audience' encompassed the group of under-fives working with a South Asian dancer in their classroom, the group of GCSE dance students watching a lecture-demonstration on a set work, a group of passers-by taking part in a site-specific piece produced for a festival, or a number of disabled people watching their friends perform in a specially created piece alongside a professional dance company. And, according to an education officer, it would appear that the production values associated with presentations of education work were the same as for more traditional performances: '*There's as much pride in putting on an educational show as performing at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.*'

If all education work is in a sense site specific, then for many companies, the artistic programme is increasingly moving in that direction: interactive digital performances can now reach millions in their own home and at any time of day. This would suggest that the dividing line between what is an educational performance and what is an artistic production is becoming more blurred. If there *is* a shift towards all the work of the companies being seen as, in essence, site specific and as '*being moulded to certain groups, a certain community or a certain instance – a certain space*', then this has implications for the status of the work within the company, and for the time and personnel dedicated to planning and facilitating it. It means considering the whole company as a resource for education in its broadest sense and that, in effect, everything the company does might be classed as 'education'.

4.7 What makes an individual company's education work distinctive?

The question of what dance companies bring to education contexts that is distinctive, and which might lead to an understanding of what they have to offer that is different from that provided by others already working in those contexts, was not explored in detail in this study, although one of the education officers mentioned it obliquely:

> *I think sometimes we are just going in and doing work that is just creative dance teaching and it isn't something unique about being a professional contemporary dance company. What we should be doing is offering something unique that can't be offered by anyone else.*

Some respondents seemed to find it hard to determine what was unique about the specifically educational contribution of their company: the question seemed to invite either self-appraisal, a summary of the particular vision of the artistic director or a reiteration of what dance generally was for. Perhaps an area for further development might be to encourage the companies to explore what added value they bring to the contexts in which they work. This would seem to be particularly relevant to work in schools, where there is a self-expressed lack of understanding of education practice within some companies.

4.8 The status of education within the companies

Asking whether education was given too much or too little status within the company depended on the interpretation of 'status'. Where this was taken to mean 'value', most respondents thought that it was '*about right*'. Where status was synonymous with the resources devoted to it, managers tended too think it was given too much status as in: '*I would like to see just a little less*' or '*given the realities of our situation, just right*'. However

committed companies were to the notion of education, balancing its demands with the day-to-day running of the company was still seen as a challenge by management, charged with balancing performing and teaching workloads. Some dancers referred to a feeling of being pulled in different directions when facilitating education work. This was more noticeable in companies where the division between artistic and education policy and practice was most pronounced. Where there was convergence of these aspects, dancers seemed to feel that both education and their work were more valued. It was thought by some that the low value placed on education work was reflected in the media, which tended to cover the artistic programme on the arts pages, while the education work hit the features or education pages, suggesting that the two were seen as separate arms of the same enterprise with different aims. However, only one education officer thought the profile of education within their organisation was too low, with too few resources directed towards it and with it taking second place to what took place on stage.

4.9 Impact of education work on the company

More people spoke of seeing and appreciating the effect the work had on those taking part more than of any other effect, and this went across all the companies.

4.9.1 Administrative staff and Board members

It seemed as if even those who had never actually, physically danced themselves, for example administrators or Board members, were able to empathise with participants to a high degree, to experience what they might be experiencing. Many regretted the lack of opportunity to leave their desks to see the work, but reported how impressed and moved they had been when they had, describing it as '*incredibly inspiring and uplifting*'. One education officer remarked that '*seeing the dancers' total commitment to the whole enterprise is inspirational: it's a bit like being social workers I suppose, because you feel like you're making things a bit better*'. One administrator acknowledged the effect that teaching had on the artistic director: '*I am aware of how important it is to him: he would not be the same artist without it*', and saw his role as helping him to achieve an equilibrium between too much and too little.

The Board members who were interviewed were committed to, and interested in the education work to a marked degree. They were mostly from an education background themselves, took an active interest and in some cases had helped to write the education policy. However, there was evidence to suggest that appointing one individual as the education spokesperson might let the rest 'off the hook', as it were, so that education for them remains a distant if worthwhile aspiration. The role of the Board as a whole in their relation to the education work of the company, their knowledge and understanding of the work, and the opportunities afforded

to them to develop understanding might be an area for further consideration. There was evidence from this study that when a Board wholeheartedly and in an informed manner meets the challenge of reviewing the education and artistic policies, and their relation to each other, then this can be a powerful force for change across the whole company.

Most of the dancers interviewed had little knowledge or awareness of the Board's role in education, but there is evidence that where dancers were involved as observers at Board meetings, they found this a useful and illuminating experience.

Education officers occasionally expressed regret at the seeming lack of interest in Board members attending events, and some considered this affected policy decisions. Where Board members did attend, it had a positive effect:

> *... to see a group of teenage boys who normally would be just so embarrassed about doing anything physical was wonderful. They were determined to prove themselves and it's great to see such commitment in young people.*

4.9.2 Artistic personnel

It was generally felt that being a teacher and being a dancer required different frames of mind and that they were quite different roles. This perhaps had something to do with the different energies needed for these roles: one perhaps more facilitating, with the energy directed towards motivating others and taking the creative lead – a role perhaps not usually taken in the main company – whilst performing needed a different energy, focused on a group task and the individual interpretation of the choreographer's ideas. The instigation of opportunities to use choreographic skills, either by making a piece for a youth group, or by taking part in a choreographic workshop, designed to develop skills in this area, was welcomed by many.

And it was also clear that teaching workshops reminded many artists of the central purpose of their work: '*It makes you think "Well, why are we doing this is the first place?"*' In this way, teaching kept the artist in touch with the essential qualities of dance, by enabling others to experience it, too: '*It's about learning and reflecting on something – a two-way process.*' For others, it was clear that '*every time I teach, I learn*', and many spoke of the sheer enjoyment and exhilaration of the work: '*I like the fact that I'm earning my living enjoying myself.*'

For another, it was seen as a very high risk but stimulating activity: '*I love the risk of going into a group of people who don't know who you are and don't care who you are. It's a very kind of sobering experience*' – an observation which has interesting parallels with being on stage and the excitement and uncertainty of performing. Others suggested that dance puts professional dancers in a somewhat unreachable place: whether this has to do with the nature of dance itself, or the particular structure and

mores of dance companies, was unclear, but there is evidence from this study that education work plays an invaluable role in 'grounding' the individual, in maintaining links with the wider world and in a sense keeping options open, and that this was essential to career development and transition to a different career when that as a dancer had ended.

For a musician involved in education work, the link with practice was perhaps more obvious – '*as a musician, the more you play the more you get from it, so we can develop music whilst we're working with the children*' – and for a dancer: '*I think it provides me with a lot of new information to take into my work, and without that resource I feel my work would atrophy.*'

Here, it was about interaction with the audience away from the main stage, in different studios and stages, seeing the intellectual and emotional engagement of the audience who are reciprocating in its creation and re-creation. Some dancers referred to the actual and perceptual distance between themselves and the audience in large auditoria and appreciated the closer contact brought about by education programmes – another dissolving of boundaries. Most mentioned the reciprocity of the process as positive and ongoing: '*It's about handing things on – learning and reflecting on learning. It's a two-way process.*'

The negative effects of taking part in programmes were the result of having insufficient time to research, plan and prepare programmes of work. On the other hand, lack of time was sometimes seen as an advantage: making work under pressure sometimes has positive artistic outcomes. There was also no time for the insightful reflection on practice that might fruitfully ensue from a successful project. For dancers on short-term contracts, perhaps combining performing with teaching, there was the day-to-day pressure to make an adequate living. For all dancers, teaching on projects could be hard on the body, with the requirement to keep in peak condition. This was a particular problem for freelancers, who lacked the supportive infrastructure of a company and the chance to take daily class.

4.10 Developing skills and knowledge within the company

It will be remembered that evaluation of education programmes was in itself seen as a useful way of developing skills and knowledge, through experiential learning. But in addition to this, it seems there are some quite specific ways in which individuals wish to develop skills and knowledge. Many spoke of the need for aesthetic, intellectual and physical replenishment, although in some cases taking part in education programmes fulfilled this. Professional development generally seemed to be seen as something for individuals to undertake on their own behalf, rather than something which was the companies' responsibility, and which might potentially take place across and between companies.

4.10.1 Developing 'knowledge'

In terms of developing knowledge, interviewees highlighted three specific areas where they felt they needed to be better informed. These related to context, specific sectors and specific client groups.

Context

As indicated in Chapter 3, some saw the new global contexts as unknown and inaccessible. One chief executive said:

> *I think it would be good for me to have a better knowledge of how things are developing not just in terms of curriculum development at primary school and secondary school but also at a higher level ... how the bigger policies, the Government policies, the educational policies are changing and developing, so I am in a position to react in some way – to see the opportunities that will fit in with where I want to go and also to see the danger points where things are going to change dramatically that might exclude the type of work you want to do, or funding sources are drying up, or new funding sources coming on stream.*

This statement seems to bring a new slant to the proactive/reactive tension. It seems that if dance companies feel they are party to, and cognisant of, the central decision-making processes, then they have the capacity to be both reactive to emerging contexts, and proactive in terms of taking artistic control, both in raising funding and more importantly in achieving greater convergence between the two pathways: where the work needs to happen and where the company itself wishes to go.

Specific sectors

Following on from this, individuals expressed a need for both an overview and a deeper understanding of specific contexts, principally: education, youth, health and Social Services. There was felt to be a lack of understanding about how these sectors operate. Many felt that they had learnt on the job, a form of experiential learning which didn't run deep enough to sustain such varied programmes of work. Greater knowledge of certain sectors could then be specifically applied to programmes. One education officer, for example, expressed a desire '*to do research into how the company's education work can fit into the National Curriculum aims with a focus on ICT*'.

Specific client groups

A need was perceived for specialised knowledge about certain client groups. Regarding work with disability and work in integrated contexts, a noticeable amount of pleasure and satisfaction was derived by all the companies from working in the area of special needs or with disabled people. One dancer had been awarded an MA for work in this field. Enjoyment could be diminished by feeling ill equipped to bring out the best in participants, with resultant frustration on both sides. A further issue is that of awareness of the health and safety needs of participants in integrated projects. While

companies experienced in work in that field may be competent in this area, others can feel and be less well prepared. This might be an area where greater sharing of knowledge and experience across companies would benefit the sector as a whole.

4.10.2 Developing skills, improving practice

There was a deeply felt need to examine and reflect on practice, so as to keep teaching open and creative. This links with the levels of training and support provided by the companies for those engaged in education, and the need to consolidate skills and affirm confidence. There seemed few opportunities for companies to reflect on this with dance practitioners in other fields, such as the formal education or community dance sectors. Many cited the wish to develop skills in communication: '*I'd like to communicate more effectively with children – how to assess a group and find the best way in.*'

The implications of the Child Protection Act were also cited as an area for professional development. Only one company currently had a policy expressing awareness of the Child Protection Act. Understanding of the issues, as suggested by dancers' here, sometimes seemed inadequate: '*Obviously you have to be careful that you can't touch people*' and '*We have to make sure they're not really embarrassed or sticking their fingers in plug sockets and stuff*'. Although these are extreme examples, they indicate that perceptions and understanding of this issue vary between companies.

In terms of behaviour management techniques, especially relevant to work in schools and with young people, training was felt to be inadequate. The Independent Theatre Council's resource pack was cited as being useful in this respect, as was exchanging information and techniques 'off the cuff', but the subject seemed not be tackled in any strategic manner:

> *If a child is being 'difficult' as the dancer perceives it, the only answer is to slap or shout at that child; there is no more constructive way of dealing with a child whose behaviour is challenging – but that's because nobody has ever been given any training in how to do it.*

Occasionally, a charismatic performer with strong beliefs was seen to be very effective without formal training: '*He is a star and can turn the most recalcitrant children into ... I mean real attitude children ... he is quite brutal with them, quite ruthless ... he is very good on discipline.*' Most of those involved in education work, however, felt that specific skills were needed for working in an education context.

Some individuals wanted to develop skills which would improve the content of their work such as exploring the relationship between music and dance and/or to develop the music content of a workshop, while others wanted to develop skills in multi-media work. A noticeable omission was the wish to

develop the format and content of dance educational programmes themselves, perhaps through shared research and development with other partners, or, with some notable exceptions, a desire to explore alternative approaches, developing critical appreciation rather than a reliance on physically active participation.

Longer-term needs

Other needs were linked with longer-term professional development. Managers and education officers wanted to learn about artistic matters while artistic directors wanted to learn about general management and education. Education officers were ambitious to learn about general arts management, and one was being seconded to an MA course in arts administration. Many expressed an as yet unfulfilled desire to experience exchanges with other companies at home and abroad, and this was at all levels within the company. Where international work had taken place, there was evidence that this had been positive and stimulating for all concerned, with lasting benefits.

Longer-term career ambitions were reflected in the wish to learn choreographic skills, or in how to teach company class. One respondent wanted to train as a school teacher, perhaps through secondment, while others wanted to carry out postgraduate research, for example, into the relationship between the work and the audience, or to study for an MA.

These findings would seem to indicate that there might be a need to further explore the coordination of approaches to continuous professional development within and across companies.

As the preceding discussion has shown, while there was considerable convergence of opinion over what the artistic aims of a company were felt to be, the perception of what education means, in considering its relationship to other areas of work, was largely dependent on personal experience. However, companies appeared to be united in the belief that dance itself was a 'good thing'. This belief in the value of dance appeared to underpin all the companies' education programmes. Notwithstanding the different degrees of integration, explicit and perceived, of artistic and education activity, such conviction appeared to ensure the continuation of companies' education work.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The study

With the overall intention of encouraging good practice through a clarification of the aims and activities of dance companies' education work, the research addressed four key objectives:

- to analyse the aims and purposes of education work in dance companies;
- to examine how these aims are translated into practice;
- to investigate both the relationship between the education work and the dance companies' overall artistic mission, and the way in which a dance company's identity relates to its education policy; and
- to use the results of the research to inform developments in the policy and practice of dance company education activity and to develop the policy of funding bodies to better suit the needs of companies and artists.

The study did not attempt to evaluate, assess or appraise the companies' educational activities. Its purpose was to understand the intentions behind a sample of dance education work – not to judge its quality or outcomes for participants.

Initially, a random sample of 20 dance companies was selected from a list of 43 companies provided by ACE. These included companies that were in receipt of project, fixed-term or revenue funding. From this random sample, ten were chosen to reflect a range of different styles and types of dance companies, including genre, cultural diversity, disability, type of funding category and geographical spread. Quality of educational provision was not considered as a criterion for selection.

Visits of one to three days were made to the ten dance companies in the sample, and a wide range of personnel was interviewed. A total of 51 interviews were completed – 46 in person and five on the telephone.

The ten dance companies forming the sample for the study represented a wide variety of dance styles and repertoires, and captured an array of approaches relating to dance and dance education. Chapter 1 considered the organisational context and structure of the companies, and offered an overview in terms of size, organisational structure and management, environmental and social contexts, artistic and education policies, the extent of education work, funding, training, advisory support and consultation with client groups.

The sample comprised two large-scale, city-based companies with their own performance venues, and eight medium- and smaller-sized companies operating for the most part in 'home' rehearsal spaces and hired performance venues. Three of the companies were very small, and the artistic director delivered most of the education work. Three of the companies worked within a particular cultural style and background, each uniquely fusing their traditional dance style with other contemporary forms such as storytelling or contemporary British dance. One company had a specific remit to work with dancers with disabilities, and another with media technologies. The phrase 'contemporary ballet' as distinct from contemporary dance was used by one company, while another company's work with narrative communication attracted ballet, as well as contemporary dance, audiences.

While differences in terms of staffing, organisational structure and, therefore, location of education were related mainly to company size, the extent and focus of each company's education work were not correlated with size. Instead, the education work reflected, in the main, the artistic director's approach to dance and dance education. Indeed, more often than not, the company's artistic and educational momentum was driven by the individual personality of the artistic director. This impetus contributed to some of the distinctive characteristics of each company, especially in the area of new choreography. By contrast, the actual contexts in which dance companies worked seemed neither so disparate nor so unique to each company – tours, pre-show talks, workshops and links with dance agencies, arts centres and schools or colleges were all mentioned, to some extent, across the board.

5.2 The aims of dance companies' education programmes

One of the main intentions of the research was to investigate the aims of dance companies' education work. The range of aims explored in Chapter 2 was complex and diverse; at the same time, the aims of individual companies, which were often interrelated, set their own respective priorities in unmistakable relief.

Five broad categories of aims were identified, each with its own set of sub-categories. The five main categories were as follows:

- integration of artistic and education aims
- client-centred education aims
- curriculum development and support
- dance-centred education aims
- education aims relating to the needs of dance companies.

The diversity of the companies in the sample, and the variety and interrelatedness of the aims they expressed, means that only the broadest indication of the frequency of aims can be offered here. A number of aims

tended to be concentrated within single companies, and the insistence in each organisation on the unique character of their artistic identity was striking. The overall frequencies given below, therefore, conceal the fact that, for a small minority of companies, some aims may be completely inapplicable.

Bearing such caveats in mind, education aims relating to the needs of dance companies emerged as the most dominant group, especially aims directed towards companies' survival, with those relating to an appreciation of the company's distinctive style being notably conspicuous. Dance-centred aims, curriculum development aims, and client-centred aims relating to the community appeared to be fairly evenly spread.

Many interviewees offered eloquent interpretations of the importance of dance to personal development. In numerous cases, this was the distinctive contribution of dance to education. However, personal development did not feature as strongly as other aims in perceptions of a company's education aims as a whole. Given interviewees' evident belief in the power of dance in this respect, the relatively lower status of personal development may suggest that it was somehow understood, or taken for granted, in references to community aims, or to aims associated with deepening the quality of dance appreciation.

5.2.1 The distinctive role of dance in education

Consideration of the distinctive role of dance in education inspired a rich array of responses. Three discrete interpretations were discernible in the data:

- A '*holistic artform*'

  The essential nature of dance was repeatedly defined by its demand for total involvement of mind, body and spirit. Such commitment was seen to be rewarded by a corresponding sense of physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual fulfilment.

- A cultural '*ambassador*'

  Interviewees from culturally specific companies emphasised the importance of dance in the communication of a culture. At times, such communication of culture seemed to be as, or more, important than the artform itself.

- *Corporation*' and '*cooperation*'

  As a '*non-verbal*' artform, the collective, physical and mental concentration required for dancing with others was widely believed to be a potent resource for developing cooperation and collaboration.

Conviction of the holistic quality of dance pervaded the responses and would seem to suggest that, for most individuals, personal development was an implicit priority for education work.

5.2.2 Influences on education aims

Company members identified a range of influences on the aims of their education programmes. Some organisations were in the process of refocusing their education policy in order to direct their work more effectively towards groups perceived appropriate to their artistic purpose. A number of interviewees recommended the invigorating effect of partnerships. In some cases, while overarching education aims, as in the five listed at the beginning of this section, were seen as unlikely to change, more specific aims were adapted according to the nature of individual projects and the expertise of those involved.

The role of the chief executive was seen as crucial for a coherent and committed approach to education. The role of the Board appeared to vary considerably from one company to another, but, where members of the Board had an interest or experience in education, their contribution was invariably appreciated.

The size of a company could affect the communication of education aims to respective members; communication was generally seen to be more effective in smaller companies where education was not confined to a separate department. Smaller companies also appeared to be more receptive to the influence of constituents, perhaps partly because they could be more flexible and, pertinently, they needed to be more responsive than larger, more well-established organisations in order to secure their audiences. Companies involved with young people in particular affirmed the priority of keeping in tune with an essentially '*ephemeral*' youth culture.

Those working with schools often assigned considerable importance to links with the National Curriculum; at the same time, the Government's emphasis on lifelong learning was upheld as an incentive to work with wider age groups. Other influences related to companies' individual circumstances, the range of contacts generated by company members, and the professional concerns of the artistic director.

All companies acknowledged the influence of funding on education aims. Many interviewees pointed out that although funding might not affect a company's underlying commitment to education, it inexorably determined the nature and scope of the activities themselves, most significantly in relation to planning. Numerous interviewees advocated long-term funding as a crucial component of any education work which aimed to achieve a lasting impact on participants, both dancers and '*critical spectators* '.

In terms of education aims overall, those relating to the survival of dance companies and those centred on the development of dance and dance appreciation were undeniably the most predominant. Such a finding may suggest a lack of confidence in the validity of dance as an artform in its own right. The majority of companies seemed to be at a turning point. While recognising the increasing opportunities to combine artistic intentions with education work, they were keenly aware of their immediate priorities

and responsibilities as professional artists. At such a transitional stage, it seemed the urgency of developing appreciative audiences for a company's distinctive style could impel the momentum for education as energetically as the desire to open access to the artform *per se*.

5.3 Translating aims into practice

It was clear that many of the companies were undergoing transition, with new education policies being created and new staff appointed. While the transitional phases were allowing some organisations to be more proactive and therefore perhaps more focused in their approach, in practice, companies frequently appeared to prefer to retain the right to initiate projects and to respond to intriguing demands which might be artistically rewarding.

5.3.1 Partnerships

Creating effective partnerships was seen as crucial to an education programme's success. Apart from individual schools, the regional dance agencies and other development agencies were seen as key players, respected for their knowledge of the field. But these partnerships were likely to be stronger for small-scale companies than for large- or middle-scale organisations. The potential for companies to establish a special relationship with a particular region or city seemed to be re-emerging, but though two or more companies might visit the same region, doing in-depth education work, there was little evidence of any collaboration, either in consolidating one another's work or in planning and delivering shared projects.

In terms of funding partnerships, projects were occasionally devised in response to new funding initiatives, although the limitations this imposed were said to be a source of irritation. While having funds designated to education from the core gave greater autonomy and the capacity to plan ahead, companies still enjoyed the entrepreneurial aspects of fundraising; unusual partnerships were seen at times to have a positive effect on creative planning. It appeared, however, that commercial sponsorship had all but dried up as a source of income.

5.3.2 Responsibilities for education work

The education officer played a crucial and complex role, acting as both the memory and the conscience of the organisation. Building on past successes and sustaining momentum, they strove to ensure that education was placed at the heart of a company's activities. However, these officers frequently felt undervalued and unsupported: recognition and appreciation of their work from senior management were not always translated into the provision of resources or the promotion of status within the organisation. In some cases, this lack of explicit support could lead to an over-reliance on animateurs to lead the projects; the larger the company, the more frequently this tended to happen.

Dancers and animateurs rarely initiated education projects or contributed significantly to their overall design. Their role as creators tended to take place in the studio, taking leadership, or being responsive to the needs of the participants. It was felt that the dancer's role in facilitating education work could not be underestimated, being seen by participants not only as the ambassador for the company itself, its ethos and artistic representations, but as a crucial component of programmes where the dancer's identity itself contributed to addressing such issues as gender, or physical disability, or to promoting a specific culture. There was a consequent tendency for animateurs to feel isolated and undervalued, perceiving disappointment amongst the recipients of their projects, for whom an animateur might appear as 'second best'.

5.3.3 Target groups

While in theory targeting only certain groups, it was clear that all the companies but one worked with a wide range of age groups in a variety of contexts. There was considerable diversity of approach to the work, but there was at times a feeling of being under pressure to deliver – of being asked to be all things to all people. None of the companies were currently working with young offenders, people in prisons and people with mental health problems; perhaps this may be related to the fact that partnerships had not been made with Social Services, health centres and hospitals to the same extent as with schools and youth services.

While a great deal of work took place in schools, working effectively with teachers was seen as problematic. Some interviewees felt there was an over-reliance on formulae in delivering work, perhaps as a result of the limitations on devising cross-curricular work when dance was situated in the PE curriculum. Companies also acknowledged inadequate understanding of new education initiatives, and expressed a need for guidance in terms of how best to serve teachers, beyond merely providing them with support packages for examination purposes. Lifelong learning was similarly identified as an area where companies needed to increase their understanding of educational opportunities.

5.3.4 Evaluation

All the dance companies were committed to evaluating their education work, seeing it as a useful tool for informing the development of the process and the policies. However, it emerged that they would welcome more external evaluation, in the belief that it might provide hard evidence of outcomes, leading to improved practice.

5.3.5 Relating aims for education work to everyday practice

When the companies' stated education aims (given in the previous section) were applied to the profiles of the actual projects, the most frequently occurring aims concerned the survival of the dance companies themselves. Very rarely were the needs of the participants, or of a particular community,

consistently placed at the forefront of policy or planning. Companies cited the following as contributory factors: a history of chronic underfunding; the volatility of the sector, with companies forming and re-forming; the fact that dance, as a relatively new form, had always had to simultaneously invent and explain itself; and the difficulties of developing and sustaining audiences, while at the same time remaining artistically at the cutting edge.

Putting the needs of the community at the centre of education practice raises the question of whether this would lead to a diminution in artistic quality. Essentially, the question for dance companies seems to be: how can they work effectively in a variety of contexts without compromising what they see as their most valuable educational resource – their skill, commitment, inspiration and artistic integrity.

5.4 Education programmes and core artistic activity

Chapter 4 considered the relationship between companies' education programmes and their core artistic activity. This presented a challenge; individual interpretations of the concepts 'education' and 'core activity' varied considerably, depending on personal experience of both education and dance.

There was, however a strongly held belief that dance was universally beneficial and potentially life-changing, with a capacity to unify physical, emotional and intellectual experience. There was perhaps less emphasis on the cultural and aesthetic context of the work, with the exception of non-western forms. There was considerable variation in the degree of integration of artistic and education activity and evidence of both structural and attitudinal barriers to greater congruence. Although the majority of respondents thought integration desirable, and thought they largely achieved it, in practice there were widely varying degrees of congruence between artistic and education aims and variations even within individual programmes of work.

It seemed that integration was more likely to occur where shared understanding and ownership of the education policy were combined with close communication; this appeared to be easier to achieve in smaller, more informal companies than in larger, more hierarchical organisations. Companies valued the impact of education work, firstly, for reminding dancers what was intrinsically important about the artform; secondly, for keeping them grounded in what was at times perceived to be a somewhat artificial environment; and thirdly, for the beneficial effect of education activities on career transition and development.

Training needs for education work ranged from a deeper understanding of the wider sociological and political spheres in which companies operated, to specific and detailed requirements, for example in behaviour management or in the application of new technologies. Many respondents expressed a

wish for greater understanding of work with disabled people. The need for awareness of the company's approach to vocational training, and the need for continuous professional development relating to education work, recurred throughout the study.

5.5 Poised for change

The fourth key objective of this research, identified at the start of the present chapter, refers to the intention to use the research findings to inform developments in the policy and practice of dance company education activity, and to adapt the policy of funding bodies to respond more closely to the needs of companies and artists.

According to many interviewees, the artform is changing rapidly, together with the range of 'appropriate' venues, and the very concepts of 'audience' and 'performance'. The emerging impression was one of a landscape where boundaries between artist and audience were gradually dissolving, and roles were becoming interchangeable. Although, to some extent, this was attributed to the introduction of new technologies, many companies acknowledged that they had not fully grasped the implications of these developments. Increasingly, it was felt that a performance in an education context was inseparable from that on the main stage and that the same high production values should apply to both. It seemed, indeed, as if dance companies may be moving away from the model of a company with twin operating arms, educational and artistic, and moving towards an approach which perceives the company as a whole as a resource for education in its broadest sense, and in which all a company's activities might be classed as education.

It is worth remembering, however, that while many companies do have the needs of participants in mind, both in creating policy and devising programmes of work, the overriding aim to emerge from the research was that of ensuring the survival of the artform through the survival of dance companies themselves. Some key questions need to be addressed. What factors currently make dance companies feel insecure? Does the overriding need to survive inhibit their capacity to thrive, and to meet their clients' educational needs? How can dance companies become a flexible resource with the capacity to be accessed by different communities, without compromising artistic quality or innovation? And as a corollary to this, given the enormous demands perceived by the companies to be placed upon them to deliver work within finite resources, is it possible and desirable to be more precise about the focus of the work, while at the same time remaining open to opportunities which fall outside these parameters and the creative stimulus they bring?

A further question, arising from the perceptions of many company members here, is whether the emphasis on interpreting the vision of the artistic director, the siting of dance within PE in the National Curriculum and (with notable exceptions) the predominance of work with the young and able-bodied have led to an over-emphasis on dance being about the body. Dance is, and always has been, an artform which synthesised others: text, music and sound design; scenery, costume and lighting design; and increasingly, the new and interactive technologies. Would, then, an appraisal of the content of education programmes be timely, as it appears to be moving away from dance as a purely physical activity and towards a more complex, multifaceted approach where appreciation is as important as participation? All companies expressed a wish to enter into mutual discussions about the content of their work, and for dialogue to be opened up with other arts and education professionals, again in the interests of crossing perceived boundaries. At the same time, a wide range of continuous professional development needs were identified by all the companies in the sample. Two of the most pressing questions arising from this study are therefore when, and how, can these needs be met?

Could the somewhat introspective approach which emerges here suggest a perception in the dance world that dance is currently less valued and accepted than other artforms, and needs to assert its validity *per se* among the population at large? Although its physicality and emotional force may make an initial impact, the more esoteric aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual dimensions may well be harder to grasp unless the experience of participation as dancer or informed spectator is sustained and supported over a period of time. Several interviewees registered dissatisfaction with a perceived alienation of many dance companies from prospective audiences in recent years, through their concentration on a less accessible '*experimental* ' or '*elitist*' repertoire. At the same time, a belief in the power of dance to release individual potential pervaded the responses and often appeared to be the driving force behind commitment to education.

If dance companies' education programmes are to flourish and develop, a wider recognition and acceptance of dance as an artform in its own right may be needed to dispel companies' anxieties about compromising artistic integrity. At the same time, a greater degree of professional security and support for individual dancers might encourage more wholehearted enthusiasm for the personal and artistic challenges inherent in educational activities.

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The report offers revealing, and sometimes challenging, information to theatre companies, policy makers and those involved in generating productive working relationships between arts practitioners and the world of education.

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AIMS IN MOTION:
dance companies and their education programmes

This research report considers the educational role and practice of ten very different dance companies based in England, from the perspective of company members and the freelance artists who work with them. During the summer of 2000, the researchers conducted over 50 interviews with artistic directors, Board members, managers and mediators, including dancers, choreographers and musicians. The interviews explored the aims of each company's education work and the way they related to the wider artistic activities.

According to many interviewees, the artform is changing rapidly, together with the very concepts of 'audience' and 'performance'. Diversity of the companies was reflected by diversity in the educational aims they expressed. Analysis of these aims revealed that, while all companies aim to promote dance as an artform, each one seemed equally concerned to promote its own distinctive style. The driving force underlying every company's education work appeared to be an unmistakable conviction in the 'holistic' power of dance for personal development.

The report outlines examples of education programmes, and considers the ways in which stated educational aims are fulfilled at various points in a project's development. It also refers to the various factors believed by companies to influence the effectiveness of their education work, while they continue to maintain their wider artistic commitment.

Some important questions for dance companies emerge from this research. In order to respond to the changes they perceive, both in the artform and in their relation to their audiences, how can they best become a flexible resource without compromising artistic quality and innovation? While some, by their own admission, suggest this may be challenging, others clearly regard it as an invigorating opportunity.

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