

Cultural Hubs: an evaluation of year one

Executive summary

Hayton Associates on behalf of
Arts Council England and the Museums,
Libraries and Archives Council



Arts Council England works to get more art to more people in more places. We develop and promote the arts across England, acting as an independent body at arm's length from government.

Between 2006 and 2008, we will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and the National Lottery in supporting the arts. This is the bedrock of support for the arts in England.

We believe that the arts have the power to change lives and communities, and to create opportunities for people throughout the country.

For 2006 to 2008, we have six priorities:

- taking part in the arts
- children and young people
- the creative economy
- vibrant communities
- internationalism
- celebrating diversity

Pupils from Cassop Primary and St. Hild's College C.E. Primary performing at Dance City. The piece, entitled *Triptych Travel*, was inspired by real, imaginary and historical journeys. Durham.

Photo: Holly Eve Watson

Contents

	page	
1.0	Introduction	3
1.1	Background and context	3
1.2	Cultural Hub themes	4
1.3	DCMS cultural offer	6
1.4	Aims and objectives of the evaluation	7
1.5	Methodology	8
1.6	Observations on the evaluation and data collected	10
1.7	Reading the results	12
2.0	Summary of outcomes	15
2.1	Management and delivery	16
2.2	Impact on teachers, schools and the wider community	21
2.3	Impact on cultural practitioners and organisations	24
2.4	Outcomes against Cultural Hub objectives and themes	26
2.5	Conclusion	32
2.6	Issues and recommendations	32
	Cultural Hub partners	35

“The first year of involvement in the Hub has been fantastic for children and staff alike. We are looking forward very much to exploring more of the same in 06/07.”

School contact, Telford

1.0 Introduction

This report summarises the findings from the evaluation of the Cultural Hubs undertaken by Hayton Associates on behalf of Arts Council England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). It examines the activities planned and delivered by the Hubs during the academic year September 2005 to July 2006. Results have been compared to the results of the baseline study published in March 2006.¹

1.1 Background and context

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) together with Arts Council England and the MLA have jointly developed three Cultural Hubs in Telford, Durham, and Bournemouth & Poole. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) also supported the development of the initiative. The DCMS has made a commitment to invest £4.5m through Arts Council England over the three years of the programme.

The aim of Cultural Hubs is to explore a model for delivering a workable cultural offer² for children and young people, at the heart of which is effective partnership working and joint planning between the cultural and education sectors.

The Hub objectives are to:

- 1 Facilitate joint planning between cultural organisations and schools, using partnership models based on local needs and capacity, which will enable them to try out ways of delivering a coherent cultural offer to all children and young people
- 2 Increase the number and variety of cultural experiences for children and young people in participating schools
- 3 Increase the number of continuing professional development opportunities for participating teachers and cultural practitioners
- 4 Increase learning in, through and about the arts and culture³

¹ Hayton Associates on behalf of Arts Council England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, *Cultural Hubs Baseline Findings*, March 2006

² DCMS, *The Creative Sparks Cultural Offer, Living Life to the Full*, 2005, p. 20 (see section 1.3)

³ Arts Council England, *Cultural Hubs Evaluation Brief*, 2005

The Cultural Hubs are exploring the benefits that such an approach brings. At the very least, it is expected that they will:

- support the development and strengthening of partnerships between key cultural organisations
- facilitate unique partnerships between schools and key cultural organisations, allowing both sectors to understand each other better
- explore whether a coherent cultural offer for all children and young people is deliverable, and if so what might be its key elements
- allow schools to take greater ownership of the cultural offer being made to their pupils by including them in programme planning from the first stage
- contribute to young people's appreciation of the arts and culture
- provide more continuing professional development opportunities for teachers and cultural professionals
- allow young people to access high-quality cultural activities and provision
- facilitate the establishment of sustainable networks between schools in the partnership, to offer support and share ideas on working with the cultural sector as well as to collaborate on projects

From the outset it was agreed that each Cultural Hub is best placed to define the model of delivery, specific outcomes and programmes they would like to set up through the partnership. This includes details of the number of sessions, young people, teachers and cultural partners and practitioners involved.

1.2 Cultural Hub themes

Cultural Hub programmes are tailored to local needs, but should contribute to the following themes:

- first access to the arts and culture
- contribution to the wider curriculum
- opportunities for Gifted & Talented young people

A pupil from Burnopfield Primary exploring 3D techniques. Durham.

Photo: Holly Eve Watson



- continuing professional development for teachers
- extended schools provision

Cultural Hubs were advised to consider that:

- the programme should promote an inclusive approach to those not already engaged in the arts and should benefit to some extent every child and young person in the schools involved
- there should be opportunities for young people with a particular interest in an area to develop this interest and deepen their experience of it⁴

1.3 DCMS cultural offer

The DCMS published a description of a comprehensive cultural offer for children and young people.⁵ The offer may vary from area to area, depending on local cultural resources and the needs and interests of children and young people. It is expected that by the time they leave school, every young person will be able to say:

- a) I have performed a piece of music live to an audience
- b) I have made my own piece of individual artwork
- c) I have taken part in a theatre production, through acting or backstage production
- d) I have taken part in a performance involving dance to a live audience
- e) I have created my own piece of media art or watched and commented on others'
- f) I have written and/or read aloud my own piece of original writing, or heard a professional writer read their original work
- g) I have visited a museum or an art gallery and experienced a collection either digitally or via a loan box
- h) I have visited a significant building or site
- i) I have visited local libraries and been supported in making use of all they have to offer
- j) I have studied documents from archives and record centres, helping me to understand the story of my community and country

⁴ Information supplied by Arts Council England based on the national framework document agreed by the DCMS

⁵ DCMS, Living Life to the Full, *ibid*

1.4 Aims and objectives of the evaluation

The overall aims of this research are to evaluate the Cultural Hubs approach and the three different models of delivery over the three years of the programme. The focus has been on:

- the effectiveness of the Cultural Hubs in delivering a cultural offer – how and what the Cultural Hubs deliver, including the role and function of the facilitator/facilitating organisation, the benefits and limitations of the three models, and the overall Cultural Hub approach
- the perceived and reported effects of participation in the Cultural Hub on schools, arts and cultural organisations, and the wider community, including parents and carers
- the perceived and reported learning outcomes of participation in the Cultural Hub programme for pupils, teachers and arts practitioners

The evaluation objectives are:

- 1 To document and explore the processes used in the three Cultural Hub models of joint planning and delivery between cultural organisations and schools
- 2 To analyse the number and range of cultural experiences for children and young people in the participating schools, rates of participation and the extent to which the programme delivers the DCMS and DfES 'cultural offer' for young people
- 3 To analyse the number and variety of continuing professional development opportunities for participating teachers and artists/cultural practitioners
- 4 To explore the effects of Cultural Hubs participation on schools, teachers, pupils and parents/carers. In particular, to find out whether participation in Cultural Hubs has enhanced, enriched and supported curriculum delivery in schools
- 5 To explore the effects of Cultural Hubs participation on arts and cultural organisations and artists and cultural practitioners. In particular, to look at changes in staffing, budget and programme structure and content, including any changes in artistic/cultural policy and delivery

- 6 To identify, with pupils and teachers, the learning that has taken place, using the framework provided by the generic learning outcomes from *Inspiring Learning for All* (www.inspiringlearningforall.org.uk)⁶

1.5 Methodology

A range of methods was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data against the research aims and the objectives of the Hubs programme. Methods included questionnaires, interviews and group discussions. All partners and stakeholders in each of the Hubs had an opportunity to make an input. See table 1 below for a summary of the methods used for each participant in the evaluation process.

Hub partners and participants	Postal questionnaires	Assisted questionnaires	Face-to-face interviews	Telephone interviews	Group discussions
Pupils		✓			✓
Lead contacts in schools	✓		✓	✓	
Teachers			✓	✓	
Parents			✓	✓	✓
Non-teaching school staff			✓		✓
Lead contacts in cultural organisations	✓			✓	
Artists, associate practitioners				✓	
Facilitators			✓		
Steering Group members				✓	

Table 1 Methods used to gather data from Cultural Hub partners and participants

⁶ Arts Council England, *Cultural Hubs Evaluation Brief*, 2005

Additional information was gathered through project evaluation forms collected by the evaluators at the end of the academic year. The format of project evaluation forms was agreed with the facilitators and introduced to the partners for completion during the year. Project evaluation forms were received from Telford and Durham Hubs. Project evaluation forms were not received from Bournemouth & Poole, which has limited the amount of quantitative information available for activities they have carried out.

The postal questionnaires were designed by Hayton Associates with detailed input from Arts Council England and the MLA and, following amendments, the final agreed questionnaire was mailed to the 49 schools and cultural organisations participating in the Cultural Hubs.

To boost response rates:

- a stamped addressed envelope was provided
- an option was given to complete online or over the telephone
- the deadline for returns, 9 June 2006, was extended until 21 July
- non-respondents received telephone reminders from the evaluators and the Hub facilitators prior to the original deadline and regularly up to the final deadline

1.5.1 Participation in the evaluation

100% of the cultural organisations (20 out of 20) returned postal questionnaires

72% of schools (21 out of 29) returned postal questionnaires, two of which were returned after the analysis was completed and therefore data from them is not included in this report

334 assisted questionnaires were completed by 283 primary and 61 secondary pupils

A total of 95 interviews were carried out with:

- 22 school lead contacts (76%)
- 20 cultural lead contacts (100%)
- 11 teachers and non-teaching school staff
- 13 parents
- 5 facilitators
- 15 Steering Group members
- 9 artists and associate practitioners
- 131 children and young people were consulted in 15 group discussions with 104 primary and 27 secondary pupils
- 16 schools were visited

1.6 Observations on the evaluation and data collected

Much of the information gathered through the evaluation process is qualitative and thus subject to interpretation by the evaluators. A number of techniques were introduced into the process to ensure a more objective approach to the collection and analysis of data.



Ex-student band 'Sunstar' perform at the Corfe Hills School Cultural Hub Fair, November 2005. Bournemouth and Poole. Photo: Rob Foddering

These included:

- ensuring data was collected from a range of viewpoints and sources
- transcription of all interview responses and identification of trends through capturing key words, phrases and concepts
- transcription of additional data, ie that which fell outside the objectives of the programme, and identification of trends through capturing key words, phrases and concepts
- where no trends were evident, providing a summary of the range of responses received
- working to find positive examples in seemingly weak areas and the negative in seemingly strong areas

Data-gathering from schools had to be completed before the end of the summer term. This meant that, in some cases, questionnaires were completed and interviews carried out with school and cultural contacts who had not yet completed activities. Some feedback was therefore speculative, based on expected rather than actual outcomes.

1.6.1 Generic Learning Outcomes

Pupils' learning has been analysed against Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs). The GLOs were developed in response to the need for museums, libraries and archives to provide evidence of learning and their impact on users. MLA developed the *Inspiring Learning for All* framework based on research undertaken by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries. The framework identified the five GLOs which form the basis of a web-based toolkit that can be used to help organisations make the measurement of learning a part of organisational policy.⁷

The GLOs are:

- increase in knowledge and understanding
- increase in skills – intellectual, practical, professional
- change in attitude and values

⁷ Research Centre for Museums and Galleries, *Measuring the Outcomes and Impact of Learning in Museums Archives and Libraries. The Learning Impact Research Project End of Project Paper*, May 2003, Re:source The Council for Museums Libraries and Archives; www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk

- evidence of enjoyment, inspiration, creativity
- evidence of activity, modified behaviour, progression

In the context of this evaluation, GLOs have been used to identify the type of learning that was reported by pupils who took part in Hub activities.

1.7 Reading the results

Comparisons made in this report between the baseline and year one results aim only to describe any added value the partnerships within the Hubs may have brought to the provision of arts and cultural activity in Hub schools. The baseline information provides a picture of overall provision in Hub schools and overall delivery by cultural organisations in the academic year 2004/05. Year one results relate only to provision through Hub partnerships in 2005/06. There is therefore no direct correlation between the baseline and year one results.

Information contained within the project evaluation forms has not been verified by the evaluators.

Only where there are notable differences between arts and MLA sector organisations and primary and secondary schools has this been noted in the report.

For ease of reference, the upper school participating in the Hub in Bournemouth & Poole has been deemed secondary and the first school has been deemed primary.

Defining terms

Where cultural organisations or their lead staff are referred to, this represents both arts and MLA sector organisations in the Hubs.

The phrase 'cultural practitioners' refers to staff of cultural organisations in the Hubs.

The word 'artist' refers to artists contracted to deliver activities who are not necessarily based in a cultural organisation.

The wider school community in this context refers to

- non-teaching school staff
- parents, carers, other family members
- school governors
- pupils as audience members
- others associated with the school who may have participated in or attended Cultural Hub activities

