

In Telford, activities also generated a high percentage of responses related to changing attitudes and values. This is borne out by the comments of pupils, supported by their teachers, who described the depth of learning and empathy they had gained about themselves, other people or other places.

Pupils in primary schools were more likely than secondary students to say that they had gained new skills.

Pupils' learning described by teachers

Most of the teachers interviewed were very positive about the impact that Cultural Hub activities had on their pupils. They identified that pupils had:

- new experiences
- been enthused and motivated to learn
- developed new skills

Some schools reported a measured increase in attainment for the pupils who had participated in Cultural Hub activities.



Students take part in a theatre workshop with Frantic Assembly, St Peter's School Hub Fair, November 2005. Bournemouth and Poole.
Photo: Rob Foddering

2.4.5 Outcomes against the Cultural Hub themes

Extended schools provision

All Hubs are offering activities both in schools and in other venues and opportunities for participation in and outside curriculum time at lunchtimes, evenings and school holidays. This reflects the commitment made by the Cultural Hubs in their year one delivery plans for over half of their projects to contribute to this theme. Examples of activities include a dance club in Durham and a youth theatre open to secondary students in Bournemouth & Poole.

Links with the wider curriculum

Schools and cultural organisations identified a wide range of curriculum links made through the activities in the Hub. These are related to arts and culture and to the wider curriculum. Schools also report cross-curricular opportunities, for example literacy linked with dance.

Modern foreign languages and numeracy are the two areas of the curriculum in which Hub activities have been delivered least often.

Provision for Gifted & Talented pupils⁹

Durham and Telford have targeted work for 395 pupils considered Gifted & Talented.

First access to arts and culture

Over 3,800 pupils who participated in Cultural Hub activities in Durham and Telford accessed this type of arts and cultural activity for the first time.

CPD for teachers

See section 2.4.3.

⁹ No information is available from Bournemouth & Poole on the work targeted for Gifted & Talented pupils and First access to arts and culture

2.5 Conclusion

The Cultural Hub programme is unique in that it promotes, encourages and facilitates partnership working between the arts, MLA and education sectors. What has been learned in year one is that:

- the relationships formed would not have occurred without the leadership and support of the facilitators

Over time, a commitment to working together has resulted in:

- inspiration and ideas for new approaches to teaching and learning
- an exploration of the way in which the resources of arts and MLA sector organisations can be used creatively to interest, engage and educate pupils
- an increase in the range, depth and quality of activities offered to schools
- the establishment of a legacy of effective working relationships that can continue after the Hub programme ends
- a joint approach to delivery of the cultural offer and the curriculum

2.6 Issues and recommendations

2.6.1 Staff capacity

Capacity, or rather the lack of it, is the major issue affecting the ability of schools and cultural organisations to fully embrace the opportunities offered through the Hub. Hub facilitators are very aware of this issue and are implementing support mechanisms to overcome the problem. However, there appear to be a number of issues that are exacerbating the problem.

Issues for schools

For the most part, schools are working in an environment that is unfamiliar to them. Cultural Hub activity is seen as additional to what they do in the classroom and it therefore takes them away from what they feel they should be focusing on.

There have been a lot of new experiences in a short time. Hub activities have opened up a rich seam of ideas and innovative ways of working. Teachers and their schools need time to consolidate what has been learned and explore ways in which this can be integrated into the classroom and into curriculum planning, schemes of work and school resources. This ability is what teachers bring uniquely to the Hub.

In year one, it is possible that there has been too much emphasis on activity, on delivering projects and activities, and that the skills and expertise of teachers have not yet been fully utilised. Those artists and cultural organisations that have worked for extended periods in schools report that they are learning new ways of approaching their work and are starting to see how new cultural input is consolidated and built upon with children and young people.

The Cultural Hub focus could widen to embrace activity in the school and ways in which learning in, through and about arts and culture is extended and progressed. This would mean that the balance of time given to the Hub shifts in perception, as more time could be aimed at teachers' work in the classroom rather than outside of it.

Issues for cultural organisations

Cultural organisations' education teams were, on the whole, working to full capacity before they started to participate in the Cultural Hubs. Larger education departments have commitments to other funders and consequently can be less flexible than their smaller partners.

If the senior management teams of the cultural partners are not fully convinced of the value of the Hubs to their organisation they will not direct resources towards it. This has resulted in some instances where staff in cultural organisations were given the responsibility of delivering Hub activities but no additional resources were allocated with which to do so.

Hub facilitators are aiming to address this issue by resourcing more posts to dedicate time to the Cultural Hub. However, more advocacy to raise the profile of the Hubs on the part of the Arts Council and MLA may help to convince cultural organisations of the value of the Hubs.

2.6.2 The cultural offer

Cultural organisations have identified the limited scope of the current cultural offer. They believe they are delivering a richer offer than that described in the DCMS definition.

It has been difficult for children and young people to make an informed input into the cultural offer about what they would like to see, as they lack knowledge of activities beyond their immediate experience. Schools and cultural organisations are consulting with them on an ongoing basis and their ideas are starting to shape future activities.

In years two and three it would be valuable if the evaluation explored more ways of describing and acknowledging the actual offer that cultural organisations make available to children and young people, and to continue to provide opportunities for children and young people to discuss what they want.

2.6.3 Capturing what is unique about the Cultural Hubs

The element that distinguishes the Cultural Hub programme from other arts or MLA sector education programmes is the collaborative nature of the work – the collaboration between the arts, MLA and education sectors.

How the outcomes from this new approach are being captured

There is a feeling within the Hubs that the current programme objectives, and thus evaluation focus, are too quantitative. There is a danger that the more ephemeral elements of the programme may be lost.

The Cultural Hubs programme presents an opportunity to explore how knowledge can be transferred in a creative environment. The evaluation could be extended in years two and three to analyse how creative knowledge transfer occurs, the elements that contribute to its success and ways in which it can be replicated.

Cultural Hubs partners

Bournemouth & Poole Cultural Hub

Schools

Broadstone First School

St Katharine's Church of England Primary School

St Walburga's Catholic Primary School

St Peter's Catholic Comprehensive School

Corfe Hills School

Cultural Organisations

Activate Performing Arts

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Bournemouth – Information, Culture and Community Learning:

- Bournemouth Library
- Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum

Poole – Culture and Community Learning:

- Poole libraries
- Poole museums

Dance South West

Dorset History Centre

Lighthouse

Durham Cultural Hub

Schools

Bullion Lane Primary School

Burnopfield Primary School

Cassop Primary School

St Hild's College Church of England Aided Primary School, Durham

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,
Coundon

Tanfield Lea Junior School

Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre

St John's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Comprehensive School

Tanfield School, Specialist College of Science & Engineering

Cultural organisations

Baltic
BEAMISH
Culture and Leisure, Durham
Dance City
Durham County Record Office
Seven Stories

Telford Culture Zone

Schools

Coalbrookdale and Ironbridge C of E Primary School
Crudgington Primary School
Dothill Junior School
Lawley Primary School
Lilleshall Primary School
Newport Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School
Newport Infant School
Queenswood Primary School and Nursery
Redhill Primary School
St Lawrence Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
St Peter's Church of England Controlled Primary School
St Peter's Church of England Controlled Primary School, Bratton
Abraham Darby Specialist School for Performing Arts
The Burton Borough School (Arts College)
Wrockwardine Wood Arts College

Cultural Organisations

Birmingham Repertory Theatre
City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO)
DanceXchange
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust
Shropshire Archives
Telford & Wrekin Council

Facilitators

Bournemouth and Poole – WAVE arts education agency
Durham – The Forge
Telford – Telford and Wrekin Council

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