Creative Partnerships: initiative and impact

The impact of sustained partnerships between schools and creative practitioners as a result of Creative Partnerships initiatives

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The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set up Creative Partnerships in 2002 to give young people in disadvantaged areas across England the opportunity to develop their creativity and ambition by building partnerships between schools and creative organisations, businesses and individuals. This report evaluates the effectiveness of Creative Partnerships initiatives in six areas of the country established as part of Phase 1, initially for two years.

It found good creative approaches and positive attitudes by school leaders, teachers and creative practitioners. In the schools sampled, involvement in the initiatives helped pupils to develop good personal and social skills. Some of the attributes of creative people were also developed: an ability to improvise, take risks and collaborate with others. However, pupils were often unclear about how to apply these qualities independently to develop original ideas and outcomes. Nevertheless, a basis for further creative development had been established, and in several schools this stimulated improvement in pupils' key skills.

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Executive summary

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set up Creative Partnerships in 2002 to increase opportunities for all children to develop creative skills by enabling children, teachers and creative professionals to work together in both education and cultural buildings such as museums, galleries and theatres. This report evaluates the effectiveness of Creative Partnerships initiatives in six areas of the country established as part of Phase 1, initially for two years.

Inspectors found good creative approaches and positive attitudes by school leaders, teachers and creative practitioners including, for example, writers, environmental designers, entrepreneurs, artists and performers. Pupils benefited from working with creative practitioners, particularly in terms of their personal and social development. In the schools sampled, involvement in the initiatives helped pupils to develop good personal and social skills. Some of the attributes of creative people were also developed: an ability to improvise, take risks and collaborate with others. However, pupils were often unclear about how to apply these qualities independently to develop original ideas and outcomes.

The most successful programmes were well led and had clear aims. However, where school aims were imprecise and insufficient thought had been given to the needs of groups of pupils, programmes were less successful.

Often the outcomes of programmes could be seen in changed attitudes and behaviours, and the demonstration of creative approaches to work. This represents a significant achievement; it included teachers who previously lacked belief in their own creativity and ability to inspire creativity in others, and pupils who were previously unconvinced by approaches to learning or the value of education.

The most effective programmes had a real purpose that motivated teachers and pupils, regardless of their prior experience. For many pupils, the high quality of the experience was directly related to the unpredictable approaches taken by creative practitioners working with teachers and the different relationships that developed. Pupils were particularly inspired by opportunities to work directly in the creative industries. Such involvement gave them high aspirations for the future, informed by a clear understanding of the relevant skills.

Programmes were less effective than they might have been because of uncertainty about pupils' starting points, and because activity that was insufficiently demanding of pupils' creativity went unchallenged. Nevertheless, a basis for further creative development had been established, and in several schools this stimulated improvement in pupils' key skills.

Key findings

❒ Most Creative Partnerships programmes were effective in developing in pupils some attributes of creative people: an ability to improvise, take risks, show resilience, and collaborate with others. However, pupils were often unclear about how they could apply these attributes independently to develop original ideas and outcomes.

❒ Good personal and social skills were developed by most pupils involved in Creative Partnerships programmes; these included effective collaboration between pupils and maturity in their relationships with adults.

❒ For a small but significant number of pupils a Creative Partnerships programme represented a fresh start. In particular, opportunities to work directly in the creative industries motivated pupils and inspired high aspirations for the future.

❒ Schools offered evidence of improvement in achievement in areas such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) which they associated with pupils' enjoyment in learning through Creative Partnerships programmes and their aim to develop thinking skills.

❒ Creative practitioners were very well trained and well matched to school priorities and needs. Most teachers gained an understanding about teaching that promoted pupils' creativity and creative teaching by learning alongside pupils.

❒ Programmes promoted good collaborative planning between subject areas in the majority of primary and secondary schools. However, in planning the programmes, pupils' starting points were insufficiently identified and sometimes in arts subjects creativity was assumed when it was not necessarily evident.

❒ Reasons for the selection of particular schools and individual pupils were unclear. This contributed to inadequate tracking of pupils' progress, particularly regarding their creative development or ability to transfer the skills learned in Creative Partnerships programmes to other aspects of their work.

Recommendations

The following recommendations arise from this survey.

The DfES and DCMS should:

- work together with Arts Council England and other key stakeholders to establish a framework that aims to give more pupils the opportunity to work with a creative practitioner.

Local authorities should:

- use local knowledge strategically to help Creative Partnerships direct resources, and support and challenge specific schools where learning remains dull, underachievement stubborn, or the creative development and achievements of young people constrained.

Creative Partnerships should:

- support schools by developing a systematic approach to monitoring that clearly identifies creative achievement, defines different stages of creative development and indicates more clearly the impact of targeted intervention

- clarify the roles of those involved so that, through well informed planning and monitoring, creative practitioners' work is well matched to pupils' starting points.

Schools should:

- identify as an integral part of school self-evaluation the specific impact of Creative Partnerships programmes on provision by evaluating how effectively the school enables all pupils to discover and deepen their creativity

- track the progress of individuals and different groups of pupils by analysing their starting points including existing creativity, by setting and sharing appropriately pitched targets, collecting evidence of creative development and showing how creative skills apply to wider achievement and fulfilment.

Creative practitioners and industries should:

- seek ways to inform teachers, pupils and parents of the creative work done in programmes outside school to make clear the opportunities and challenges of involvement and employment in the creative industries

- increase the opportunities for pupils and teachers to work directly in the creative industries.

Background: Creative Partnerships

1. Continuing changes in patterns of work and leisure make it all the more necessary that children and young people have adaptable skills relevant to future employment. Creativity has an important part to play if pupils are to enjoy and achieve to the full and contribute to the economy and society.

2. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) set up Creative Partnerships in 2002 give young people in disadvantaged areas across England the opportunity to develop their creativity and ambition by building partnerships between schools and creative organisations, businesses and individuals. The initiative aimed to bring cohesion between education, creative and cultural sectors, initially in areas of England where significant deprivation was known to exist.[1]

3. Creative Partnerships aims to build sustainable relationships between schools, creative individuals and organisations for the purpose of changing

    *   the approach and attitudes of teachers
    *   the practice of creative individuals and organisations
    *   the aspiration and performance of young people.

    These aims would be met by encouraging a focus on developing creativity in young people and creative approaches to teaching all aspects of the curriculum.[2]

4. By 2006, this initiative had reached over 2,500 schools and involved 3,500 creative organisations, more than half of which were small to medium-sized private sector businesses from the creative industries. Additionally, Creative Partnerships had provided training for over 6,200 artists and individuals from the creative and cultural sector to enable them to work with schools.

5. Creative Partnerships aims to establish a place for creativity in the curriculum, in school and beyond the classroom. For this to be effective, partnerships between schools and external agencies need to be

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[1] Creative Partnerships is the name of the national organisation based at Arts Council England and funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Education and Skills. The work of Creative Partnerships is divided into 36 geographical areas of which six were selected for this survey.

[2] Creativity is defined in this survey as a combination of meanings expressed by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE): 'Imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value'; and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA): 'Seeing what no one else has seen, thinking what no one else has thought and doing what no one else has dared.'

sustainable, with a supportive infrastructure that works across education, creative and cultural sectors; the extension of Creative Partnerships in 2004 thus provided an opportunity to establish long term impact.

6. The survey took place in the context of increased curriculum flexibility encouraged in *Excellence and enjoyment* in primary schools, and in *14–19 Education and Skills*.[3] This survey considered the progress made by schools through effective use of Creative Partnerships in this context. It evaluated the approaches to teaching and learning that were specifically designed to promote pupils' creativity.

7. Different programmes in the Creative Partnerships areas stimulated a range of approaches, including creative practitioners working in schools and in the local community, pupils working in creative environments and industries outside school, and collaboration within and between schools. Programmes in six areas were judged good by Creative Partnerships. Inspectors agreed that good provision was evident overall.[4]

Impact on the enjoyment, achievement and progress of learners

8. Pupils made significant gains in their personal and social development. Their creative achievements were emergent rather than advanced overall. Some of the schools offered evidence to suggest a correlation between pupils' involvement in Creative Partnerships and improved achievement more widely, but this was largely anecdotal.

Creative development

9. Most Creative Partnerships programmes were effective in developing in pupils some attributes of creative people: an ability to improvise, take risks, show resilience, and collaborate with others. Creative practitioners, teachers and support staff clearly valued these as skills for pupils to develop and apply in order to express their own creativity. The majority of pupils interviewed knew these qualities were considered important. However, pupils were often unclear about how they could apply them independently to develop original ideas and outcomes.

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[3] *Excellence and enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools* (ISBN 1 84185 993 1), DfES, 2003; *14–19 Education and Skills*, White Paper, 2005, DfES; available from www.dfes.gov.uk/publications

[4] Programmes are the series of projects between schools, creative practitioners, creative industries and cultural sectors coordinated by Creative Partnerships.

Applying creativity

The following examples relate to Year 2 pupils in different schools.

Pupils were developing an understanding of shape in mathematics. The teacher provided the creative practitioner with a clear and succinct lesson plan that described the shapes that she wanted the pupils to recognise and name, building on her previous lesson. Pupils, in pairs, used a digital camera to collect images of different shapes they could find. The creative practitioner encouraged the pupils to look at shapes, inspiring them by sharing what he could see by standing in places where interesting shapes could be found. He kept challenging the pupils to find shapes that nobody else had seen. The use of cameras made the pupils look more closely as objects were transformed into shapes. Pupils quickly discovered for themselves that unexpected shapes emerged. For example, a circle painted on the playground became an ellipse when photographed from a distance. Some began to see what would happen if they tilted the camera or made the picture smaller or larger. One girl suddenly realised that everything had a shape and exclaimed excitedly 'there are shapes everywhere'. With eyes wide she turned to the inspector and said '…and there are squares all over your tie'.

In another school:

As part of a class topic about 'ourselves' groups of pupils worked with a creative practitioner to make self portraits. With little knowledge about their previous work, the creative practitioner used large sheets of paper and expected the pupils to draw life-sized images for the first time. By sharing examples of different artists' work, he explained how different parts of the body might appear small or large depending upon the distance. To the surprise of staff who usually worked with the pupils, all of them were able to use scale to good effect in their own work. Not satisfied with this, the creative practitioner demonstrated how different tints and tones of colours also helped some parts of a picture look near and other parts far. The large paintings that developed were displayed in the local library. The opportunity to exhibit their work in a public place added an extra incentive for the pupils to aim high. Common remarks were that the work demonstrated the value of setting high expectations and exploring unfamiliar approaches to familiar topics, and that when skills were taught confidently the differences between pupils' responses were wide. Pupils understood how to express original ideas. Rarely, however, did pupils show that they could transfer these skills to other situations.

10. The application of creative skills was strongest amongst the small minority of pupils who were given opportunities to work directly in the creative industries. These pupils showed a clear understanding about the relevance

of team work, meeting deadlines and how creative practitioners resolve the needs of others through negotiation, modification and compromise. Several pupils understood how and why specialist equipment can be used and were able to transform their own ideas into outcomes of professional quality.

Young professionals

In a large secondary school with specialist status as a business and enterprise college different groups of pupils worked in the creative industries to develop outcomes of a professional quality. One group worked with a media company to create a CD about 'Ice and Fire' as a geography teaching resource, following a visit to Iceland. Another group transformed the business suite and the school foyer by visiting a local hotel and working with the designer. A different group worked in fashion design to create a school uniform that reflected the specialist status of the school: the small mobile phone pockets incorporated into the smartly cut suits were particularly popular with the pupils.

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11. In some cases creative practitioners were skilled at sharing their own creative work with pupils and teachers in school and showing the connection with employment opportunities. However, the majority of pupils who worked with creative practitioners in school knew little about their work outside it. This constrained pupils' understanding about the connection between creative people and the diverse ways in which their creativity is nurtured, developed and expressed in different forms. In some schools, pupils were aware that their teachers also developed their own creativity outside school because they regularly shared their work as a stimulus; a few pupils understood the difference, namely that a creative practitioner maintained regular contact with the creative industries, often as a main source of employment.

12. The work of Creative Partnerships has been effective in broadening the perception of pupils and teachers that creativity can be expressed through many different areas and aspects of the curriculum although this is not yet common practice. One large secondary school with specialist performing arts status expressed its mission statement as 'Shaping the future through creative learning'. The school's commitment to this was evident from the high degree of energy and enterprise displayed by the staff, students and creative practitioners. Exploration and experimentation underpinned students' creativity across the curriculum, combined with self-evaluation at all levels that promoted and valued reflection. In this school students advanced their creativity to an exceptionally high level.

13. Pupils' high creative achievement was observed in several arts-based projects and included work in performing arts as well as innovative work in two- and three-dimensional and digital media. In contrast, in some

schools it was taken for granted that the arts subjects are inevitably creative; as a result pupils did not benefit from the use of creative practitioners to challenge and deepen the quality of their creativity expressed through the arts.

14. Similarly, in some schools the opportunity was missed to evaluate and build upon the work of pupils already identified as creative by giving them the chance to learn alongside a creative practitioner. More generally, few schools gave attention to the issues of progression to ensure that pupils' work with creative practitioners took into account their existing level of skill. Some pupils were frustrated that there were no further opportunities to develop the skills that they had learned alongside creative practitioners.

Personal development and well-being

15. Schools were consistent in their evaluation that Creative Partnerships promoted personal and social development. Good attitudes to learning and self-confidence were evident during the survey. Convincing evidence was provided in all Creative Partnerships areas about the contribution of the programmes to Every Child Matters outcomes. The vast majority of pupils directly involved enjoyed their education in and through Creative Partnerships; good behaviour, cooperation, enthusiasm and pride were common outcomes. Skills that were consistently improved – literacy, numeracy, ICT, self-confidence, team working, an ability to show enterprise and handle change – are likely to contribute to pupils' future economic well-being.

16. The nature of particular initiatives enabled some pupils to develop good regard for the safety and well-being of others; they showed high levels of responsibility in potentially high risk situations such as handling different materials. In a smaller proportion of projects pupils showed that they could manage personal stress, contributing to a healthy lifestyle. Opportunities for pupils to make a positive contribution to the community through Creative Partnerships programmes were valued by pupils; in community-based projects, pupils displayed high levels of social responsibility.

17. Schools were acutely aware of the high level of pupils' motivation during Creative Partnerships programmes. In primary, secondary and special schools pupils were able to sustain interest and concentration for long periods of unbroken time. The common reasons for this, as expressed by pupils, were the tangible outcome and their determination to learn as much as possible from a creative practitioner while they were in school.

18. A small minority of schools analysed the attendance of pupils participating in Creative Partnerships programmes. During the programme those with usually poor attendance showed a significant improvement. For some pupils, their involvement in Creative Partnerships proved a turning point:

good attendance and participation in learning continued beyond the project. In a small but significant proportion of schools improvements in pupils' attitudes and behaviour during projects signalled the start of a return to schooling.

19. Pupils interviewed as part of the survey expressed clear and convincing views about the value of their involvement with creative practitioners. All enjoyed building a working relationship with an adult who shared experiences and skills unlike those of the teacher. In some cases pupils reflected that relationships with other pupils and staff involved in the programme were changed for the good; their confidence to share ideas was a consequence of an improved sense of value.

20. Many parents shared and supported pupils' creative activity and recognised the implications of this for career choices. Others, particularly the parents of higher- achieving pupils, continued to be sceptical not just about the creative industries but also about the appropriateness of vocational experience for their own children.

Standards achieved

21. In all the survey schools, there was evidence that pupils' achievement had improved during the period of involvement in Creative Partnerships. Although schools were unable to show a direct correlation between the baseline attainment of the pupils involved, their development of specific skills through Creative Partnerships programmes and their progress in achieving generally higher standards, all believed that the involvement had played a significant part.

22. Improvements in literacy, particularly writing, and speaking were significant in the majority of schools visited. Pupils were interested in and inspired by projects and were more willing to express their feelings on paper or in discussion. Subject matter that related to their own lives and interests or new experiences introduced by creative practitioners in school or on visits provided rich sources of inspiration for pupils to talk or write about. Pupils' self-confidence developed through collaborative work contributed to clear, fluent and sometimes adventurous use of complex vocabulary. In the best lessons the specialist language used by creative practitioners provided an opportunity for teachers to intervene by checking pupils' understanding and explaining meanings in context.

23. Developing and applying mathematical skills in context was also an indicator of pupils' achievement which several schools identified. Pupils were able to solve often complex shape and spatial problems through a sense of discovery which was encouraged and often demonstrated by creative practitioners. The natural and built environment was used particularly well to explore and deepen pupils' conceptual understanding.

Good observation and questioning by teachers and support staff resulted in pupils pursuing alternative lines of enquiry.

24. Pupils used information and communications technology (ICT) effectively to research, explore, develop and model ideas in and across different subjects. Projects based in the creative industries enabled pupils to advance their skills through access to professional resources and the expertise required to use them. This was apparent not only in the arts but in other foundation subjects. For example, pupils created high quality learning resources for others that presented their understanding of abstract concepts in a sophisticated form. This challenged pupils to consider how they themselves learned.

Sustaining and achieving

Over a sustained period working with Creative Partnerships a small urban infant and nursery school in an area of high social deprivation developed the confidence to improve the performance of pupils through whole school change, placing the arts at the centre of the curriculum. Every class from nursery through to the end of Key Stage 1 began a year-long project in sculpture and dance. Pupils had asked, through consultation, to make things and make them big. Staff observations had also shown that pupils, particularly boys, needed to be more physically active. The school observed that during the year pupils' confidence grew, they became more able to work in teams, individual children began showing talents in different art forms – all things the school might have anticipated. But the school noted two developments they had not expected: the emotional needs of pupils were being met through the project, and academic achievement improved. This was particularly marked at the higher levels in maths and science achieved by boys.

The school recognised the amount learnt by staff working alongside creative practitioners but thought the artists had brought much more through their enthusiasm, knowledge, creative spirit and passion for their art form that could not be replicated by staff. The school had also chosen four male artists because the school had all female staff. In consultation with the local authority the school directed its resources to take increasing and eventually complete responsibility for sustaining this approach.

Providing for creativity

25. This survey evaluated the approaches to curriculum development, teaching and learning that were specifically designed to promote pupils' creativity. Creative Partnerships programmes as an entity were effectively planned and taught overall. Within individual schools these represented more adventurous approaches to curriculum design than those usually taken and some teachers adopted a wider range of teaching approaches.

However, it was rare to find fundamental change to the whole curriculum, or teaching that was sufficiently confident to identify and build on existing creativity.

Curriculum development

26. Without exception, schools valued opportunities to plan with a creative practitioner. The questions asked by them about the purpose and relevance of intended strategies, linkage between subjects and use of time and resources, resulted in initiatives that provided pupils with the 'unpredictable experiences' that stimulated creativity. Most teachers involved in the projects identified a shift in their planning towards more open-ended outcomes while remaining clear about learning objectives. Thus, for example, some teachers were more critical of the published schemes of work that they had been using and sought to adapt them to provide greater 'ownership'.

27. In all the schools, headteachers supported the aims of Creative Partnerships; all were positive about the potential of the initiative as a stimulus for thinking creatively about future curriculum developments. Despite this, a high proportion of Creative Partnerships initiatives, although well planned over the course of the programme, remained disconnected from the established curriculum. The following example shows how a project could become an enduring part of curricular provision.

Linking learning together

In a large, culturally diverse secondary school, Year 10 pupils worked on a Creative Partnerships programme as part of their science curriculum, but also involving other subject areas. The project involved designing, making and sustaining a habitat in order to understand and appreciate the concept of interdependence. This involved visits to the Eden Project and Barbara Hepworth Gallery in Cornwall for information and inspiration in science and art, links with the London Wildlife Trust and a contemporary landscape designer. The pupils' work in the school playground, its bio dome and surrounding gardens, became critical to the habitat's survival. The process developed collaboration and a sense of community; the outcome was used to stimulate whole-class learning, individual work placements and leisure. Integrated learning between science and art continued beyond the project; work between mathematics and graphics developed through further exploration of the playground as a shared learning resource.

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28. A strong feature of many of the projects was enrichment of the existing curriculum. Creative practitioners often recognised previously missed opportunities to stimulate the senses and demonstrate creativity. In primary and secondary schools they often found effective ways to make

sense of what they saw as a disparate curriculum. For example, familiar resources such as the school buildings and grounds were seen as underused resources that naturally provided a common link between subject areas.

29. Visits to cultural settings and places of interest often incorporated a fresh perspective as a result of the creative practitioner's own experience and were used as a stimulus for creativity. In the best examples practitioners worked alongside the pupils, using analysis, observation, questioning and recording skills to demonstrate how to gather and interpret ideas and resources during short experiences outside school. In a few cases, sustained links enabled pupils to understand the purpose of revisiting. Some pupils benefited from revisiting with their families.

30. For the small proportion of pupils who worked with creative practitioners in their working environment, regular visits to creative industries profoundly changed the nature and purpose of learning. Pupils of all abilities learned how to apply skills developed in school or learned new skills they needed in order to make a contribution. In all cases the relevance of the curriculum became clear, and for some fundamentally changed their aspirations. This included secondary age pupils of high academic ability whose previous understanding of vocational links had been restricted to a short period of work experience, often unrelated to their career plans.

Teaching

31. A fundamental aim of the programmes of training for creative practitioners was to establish the difference between creative teaching and teaching for creativity. This element of the training was generally effective, enabling teachers to distinguish clearly between teaching that confidently used a wide range of stimulating strategies and teaching that created the conditions for the pupils to express their creativity. In the small minority of cases where there was inadequate analysis of the meaning of creativity, this created uncertainty about how individual lessons contributed to the programme of creative development and insufficient confidence to take calculated risks.

32. The most effective teaching combined the teacher's knowledge of pupils and curriculum requirements with the creative practitioner's experience of creativity and its applications. However, the development of complementary roles and responsibilities was widely variable. Where partnerships were less effective, teachers were too passive when creative practitioners took the lead, or creative practitioners were too prescriptive in their approach. Although the immediate outcome appeared impressive, it contributed little to pupils' long term creative development. Such weaknesses were often not recognised or communicated to schools and creative practitioners.

33. In some lessons, well-trained support staff enabled creative practitioners and teachers to maximise their impact. They helped pupils with their learning through close observation and skilled questioning. In these lessons teachers, support staff and creative practitioners all focused on promoting and developing individual responses by different pupils.

34. The clear impact of working with experts was evident in the raised expectations of teachers, particularly in primary schools. Here, the expectations of creative practitioners were often driven by a confidence with ideas, concepts or materials that initially contrasted with that of the teacher. However, pupils mostly responded to ambitious approaches by meeting or exceeding these expectations, often responding unexpectedly. In turn, this transformed teachers' expectations about creativity, as shown in the following example.

Transforming teaching together

A recent Ofsted inspection of a large primary school that provides leading teaching for creativity as a Creative Partnerships core school reported: 'There are examples of outstanding teaching… Such exemplary teaching is characterised by the provision of highly stimulating activities. Year 6 children's dramatisation of the story of Macbeth [is an example] of outstanding teaching being converted into excellent learning.'

The Shakespeare project referred to aimed to increase pupils' motivation and enthusiasm for writing, particularly that of boys. It was led by an advanced skills teacher (AST) at the primary school, who enabled other schools to join a very well coordinated programme. This included a stimulus workshop with the Royal Shakespeare Company, together with four creative practitioners who worked with teachers in schools to help transform their teaching. The teachers reflected very positively on their involvement. One commented, 'The drama techniques and strategies have been a revelation in motivating my reluctant boys; now they have a purpose to write and first hand experience from which to draw.' Another said, 'I now feel much more skilled in making a complicated theme/text more accessible to the children by using these strategies. They are having fun and learning too.'

It became apparent to those involved in the project that these skills were not just relevant to Shakespeare or writing skills, but could also be used as a methodology across the curriculum.

Higher than usual expectations in secondary schools were found where pupils had the opportunity to put their proposals into action, so that they were more than just 'good ideas'. Individual secondary age pupils were also seen in a new light, particularly boys whose enthusiastic response to

practical approaches to learning often contrasted with their previously slow pace of work.

Learning

35. In the best provision, pupils, teachers, support staff, creative practitioners and occasionally, parents learned together, albeit from different starting points and with different skills and experiences to use. This created a genuine sense of discovery that fostered curiosity and minimised fear of failure. Pupils asked questions and offered answers confidently because no one assumed the role of expert; everyone's expertise contributed to learning. In this climate the skills of creative practitioners were valued because of their difference from those of teachers and support staff. Pupils of all ages were fascinated by insights into the world of a creative practitioner, although more frequent and explicit use could have been made of their unique experiences.

36. The relevance of learning was a consistently good feature. Taking an unfamiliar approach to learning had involved discussion between teachers and creative practitioners that sharpened objectives for the project and individual lessons. Pupils were particularly driven to learn when working for a purpose involved meeting deadlines, satisfying a real need or playing a role that others depended upon. However, pupils often did not realise the significance of the skills they had acquired for the future, regardless of whether they intended to work in the creative industries or not.

37. Most projects enabled pupils to learn how to use familiar resources differently or use new equipment and materials for the first time. Even though few projects involved work outside school in creative industries, pupils were often given authentic experiences in school. Creative practitioners and schools often worked hard to create environments for learning that immediately stimulated pupils and indicated that something special was being offered. Those pupils that did work in the creative industries learned a great deal as a result of using specialised resources and seeing how they were used by creative practitioners. In some cases the quality of pupils' own ideas and work was transformed, for example, through computer-aided enhancement of professional quality.

Learning through 'new media'

A small media company was involved to bring together pupils from three schools in a newly established 'education village'; this kick-started the establishment of a fully equipped television studio that provided a new context for learning. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 with moderate learning difficulties were motivated to continue learning in an after-school club. Their roles as explorers and reporters on a fantasy island were authenticated by opportunities to use professional equipment such as the autocue used by television newsreaders. Pupils learned about the importance of presentation skills and developed new interest in reading for a purpose.

Leading for creativity

38. Overall, Creative Partnerships area teams developed creative practitioners effectively and supported schools efficiently. Success stories were celebrated and shared through professionally presented publications and events. In schools senior and middle leaders were committed to Creative Partnerships for accelerating school improvements and focusing their vision. However, creative practitioners and schools were insufficiently challenged because of a lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation. The unique contribution of Creative Partnerships was insufficiently tracked overall, particularly the progress made by individuals and different groups.

Leadership and management

39. Knowledge about creative thinkers in schools and the creative sector was a good feature of the area delivery teams of Creative Partnerships. This knowledge enabled a close match between a school's needs and the expertise of creative practitioners. In most areas, delivery teams used their prior experience of work in the creative industries very effectively to build working relationships in the locality; this was highly valued by schools.

40. In each of the six geographical areas selected, a Creative Partnerships Management Board had been established to coordinate programmes within and between the schools in their area. They contained individuals with formidable skills, expertise and influence in education, creative and cultural sectors. The level of involvement by local authorities was variable; in the best examples local authorities helped Creative Partnerships to respond to education priorities nationally, in the locality, and in schools. It also strengthened planning for sustainability in some areas. Without exception, where local authorities were significantly involved this gave weight to Creative Partnerships initiatives.

41. A high level of professional trust had been built between educational, cultural and creative sectors in the different areas. Area delivery teams had developed credibility with schools and creative industries in the locality through businesslike management. When the national team visited an area, this had an impact on the quality of monitoring. However, the criteria for selection and de-selection of schools – for example, levels of deprivation, underachievement or inclusion that schools, areas or national teams were able to use as a baseline – were insufficiently clear.

42. Area and school leaders were clear about their contribution to the changes that Creative Partnerships were designed to make to teachers' approaches and attitudes and to young people's aspiration and performance. However, the thrust for 'change in the practice of creative individuals and organisations' was insufficiently embedded in the aims or actions of areas or schools visited. There was very clear articulation about the impact on the school as an organisation and this often included the local community, although this was not often the same as the creative community.

Developing a community identity

An urban primary school in an ethnically diverse community improved the community dimension of the school through the involvement of parents and interest of pupils. One project enabled a group of Turkish mothers who previously had little to do with the school and whose command of English was limited, to bring their traditional textiles into the school to talk about them. Another project that integrated locality into the curriculum uncovered fascinating stories about the ancestors of the pupils, many of whom had originated from other places. The school developed a stronger identity in the community by leading through creativity as an area of common interest.

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43. The appointment of a particular individual within partnership schools to take responsibility for the coordination of creativity contributed significantly to effective management. In the best cases these 'creative ambassadors' not only promoted all things creative but analysed the potential that other initiatives had for advancement through Creative Partnerships, for example the national strategies.

Managing change creatively

A large urban secondary school explored improvements to whole school assessment through a project that involved Year 9 and Year 12 students working with creative practitioners. In partnership with a researcher, students investigated different approaches and forms of assessment by devising questionnaires, conducting interviews and making observations.

Partnerships between mathematics and animation, history and radio journalism, and science and photography explored creative approaches to assessment for learning.

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44. Headteachers interviewed during the survey fostered innovation within their schools and embraced Creative Partnerships because the principles complemented and refined existing school aims. Senior and middle leaders said that involvement with Creative Partnerships had given them greater clarity and confidence in planning for creativity. School improvement priorities were closely linked to project aims in most cases. Different initiatives were often combined to maximise impact.

45. Some schools were much more successful than others in developing policies and practice that demonstrated long term commitment specifically to the aims of Creative Partnerships. Some areas and schools had planned for sustainability by gradually increasing the deployment of school resources to projects or enabling schools to extend and adapt partnerships independently. A clear commitment to sharing effective practice with schools and individuals with little previous experience was evident through the development of core school responsibilities and the role of 'creative ambassadors'. However, the involvement of all pupils in core schools as well as other schools with creative practitioners was uncommon.

Monitoring and evaluation

46. Area delivery plans equipped the different creative partners with a good level of information that included area objectives, school involvement, the range of creative practitioners and industries participating, the delivery model employed, and financial management. However, they contained insufficient detail about the specific groups of pupils targeted for involvement. As a consequence, overall monitoring and evaluation of the impact of Creative Partnerships on pupils' progress remained a weakness.

47. In order to ascertain the extent to which there were developments in creativity in young people, an evaluation toolkit was recently developed and distributed. This helpfully provided clear indicators of creativity. However it has not yet been universally adopted across Creative Partnerships schools as a consistent approach to monitoring and

evaluating pupils' creative development, creativity of teaching or teaching for creativity in schools.

48. Schools and area delivery teams demonstrated clear and consistent understanding about the attributes of creative people. Anecdotal evidence about improvements in attitudes and behaviour was wide-ranging and convincing. In some schools lesson observations and discussions with pupils enabled inspectors to judge that personal development was good during Creative Partnerships programmes. However, systematic and focused evidence-gathering that contributed to individual pupil portfolios was not yet widely established. It was most advanced in the Foundation Stage, where schools were already familiar with this approach, using it to assess pupils' progress in reaching the early learning goals (which include creative development).

49. The time and energy invested in building good relationships between the different partners has resulted in extensive knowledge about the aims and actions of different programmes, both within and between schools. However, the high level of professional trust built through partnership working has not yet been used to best advantage. Approaches to evaluation are not sufficiently critical in focusing on improving pupils' creativity.

Notes

The survey was carried out to evaluate the accuracy of Creative Partnerships' self-evaluation that in a sample of Phase 1 schools the impact of Creative Partnerships was good. In the second half of the summer term 2006 three HMI and three Additional Inspectors, all with experience of Creative Partnerships and the arts subjects, worked in pairs, each pair conducting two visits to different Creative Partnerships areas. Creative Partnerships area delivery teams, led by the area Director, signposted documentation and selected schools for sample visits. In each area the delivery plan was scrutinised as a starting point together with background information for each school.

Visits to schools included scrutiny of school-based documentation; interviews with the headteacher, the 'creative ambassador', creative practitioners, pupils, teachers, support staff, parents, governors and other creative partners; observation of lessons; observation of planning activities involving staff and creative practitioners; and analysis of pupils' work.

Additional evidence was gathered from school inspections in the areas sampled where the impact of Creative Partnerships had been identified. Since the implementation of Ofsted's new framework for inspection from September 2005, the shorter reports have continued to refer to Creative Partnerships, particularly where school self-evaluation has identified areas of impact that inspectors have followed up and found to be significant.

The survey methodology

The survey used the definition of creativity used by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE): 'Imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value.'

The report *All our futures: creativity and education* (1999) identified four characteristics of creative processes:

- They always involve thinking or behaving imaginatively.
- The imaginative activity is purposeful: that is, it is directed to achieve an objective.
- These processes must generate something original.
- The outcome must be of value in relation to the objective.

The definition used by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) was also used to inform the inspection: 'Seeing what no one else has seen, thinking what no one else has thought and doing what no one else has dared.'

Creativity prompts developed for this survey

Achievement and standards

- **To what extent do pupils demonstrate creativity through their working processes?**
  Are pupils able to explore, improvise and capitalise on the unexpected?
  Do pupils value creative diversity in their own achievements and that of others?

- **How creative are the outcomes of pupils' achievements?**
  Do achievements show that pupils are able to push the boundaries of materials, ideas and processes?
  Do outcomes express the uniqueness of pupils, their feelings, influences and aspirations?

Quality of provision

- **How effectively are creative practitioners used to develop pupils' creativity?**
  How well are the unique skills and experiences of artists, performers and creatives employed?
  How well do pupils prepare for and follow up their encounters with creative practitioners?

- **How creative is teaching?**
  Do teachers model the creative process?
  How are unexpected opportunities to develop creativity balanced with objective-led planning?

- **How creative is learning?**
  Are opportunities for pupils to make choices, think divergently, pursue unpredictability evident?
  Does the learning environment stimulate curiosity, and enable pupils to reflect and collaborate?

- **How effectively is creative development assessed?**
  Are unpredictable opportunities to assess creative development recorded?
  Are assessment opportunities identified and used effectively?

- **How effectively are opportunities designed to promote creativity connected to the wider curriculum and learning?**
  How effectively is creative development tracked across the curriculum?
  How effectively do teachers and learners build on their creative achievements?

- **How effectively do creative partnerships contribute to the quality of care, advice and support for pupils?**
  How does provision for pupils' creative development contribute to safeguarding their welfare and promoting their personal development and well-being?
  How does provision for pupils' creative development contribute to their capacity to stay safe, be healthy and make a positive contribution to the community?

Leadership and management

- **How effectively is the school's commitment to creative development expressed?**
  Do the aims of the school show that creativity is promoted and valued?
  Do the school's quality marks, for example Artsmark, Specialist College Status, incorporate creativity?

- **To what extent is there an agreed understanding about the meaning of creativity?**
  How has creativity been discussed as a concept by teachers within and across subjects?
  How has creativity been discussed as a concept with pupils and their parents?

- **To what extent is good practice in creativity identified and disseminated?**
  How effectively are the creative achievements of pupils communicated within and beyond school?
  How effectively are achievements of creative practitioners communicated within school?

- **How effectively are external partnerships managed to maximise impact?**
  How effectively are creative partnerships monitored and evaluated, and findings acted upon?
  How inclusive is the impact of creative partnerships on different pupils?

Annex

Creative Partnerships areas visited for this survey

Kent
London East
Merseyside
Nottingham
Slough
Tees Valley

Schools visited for this survey

School	Local authority
Allanson Street Primary School	St Helens
Arboretum Nursery School	Nottingham
Beaumont Hill School and Technical College	Darlington
Birkdale Primary School	Sefton
Bishopsgarth School	Stockton-on-Tees
Brockhill Park Performing Arts College	Kent
City and Islington College	Islington
Clavering Primary	Hartlepool
Dunkirk Primary and Nursery School	Nottingham
Egglescliffe School	Stockton-on-Tees
Formby High School – specialist school for the performing arts	Sefton
Gallions Primary School	Newham
Glenbrook Primary and Nursery School	Nottingham
Godolphin Junior School	Slough
Halewood College – specialist school for the performing arts	Knowsley
Hythe Community School	Kent
Jubilee Primary School	Hackney
Lauriston School	Hackney
Linthorpe Community Primary School	Middlesbrough
Lydden Primary School	Kent
Manning Comprehensive School	Nottingham
New Heys Comprehensive – specialist school for business and enterprise	Liverpool
Our Lady of Peace Catholic Infant and Nursery School	Slough
Redcar Community College A Specialist Visual and Performing Arts Centre	Redcar and Cleveland
Rosehill School	Nottingham
Rufford Infant School	Nottingham
Sandwich Technology School	Kent
St Anthony's Catholic Primary School	Slough
St Bernard's Convent School	Slough
St Edmund's Catholic School	Kent
St Joseph's Catholic High School	Slough
Stoke Newington School	Hackney
Stormont House	Hackney
The Churchill School	Kent
Priory School	Slough
West Kirby Grammar	Wirral
Wexham Court Primary School	Slough