



Creative Partnerships

This much we know...

# Research digest 2002-2006

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# Foreword

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## David Parker, Research Director, Creative Partnerships

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The research summaries collected here represent a sample of the first phase of research and evaluation activity across Creative Partnerships. They vary both in terms of methodology and focus, but together they constitute an account of impacts and practice both in local Creative Partnerships areas and across the national programme from 2002-2006. The summaries have been written with the editorial support of the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE). The full reports are available at [www.creative-partnerships.com](http://www.creative-partnerships.com)

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The aspiration behind Creative Partnerships is to foster creativity in schools with a view to creating long-term structural change across the education system as a whole. Because of these ambitions the programme needs to be evaluated in terms of the change it might make both in terms of impact and effect, but also in terms of implementation and delivery. One cannot really be fully understood without the other. These complementary aspects are collected together and described as outcomes and outputs in the delivery agreement that Creative Partnerships has with the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

Turning this delivery agreement into a research strategy presents a series of challenges. Because Creative Partnerships is such a varied and complex initiative, and because it takes place in a range of different localities and contexts, evaluation and research to date have been disparate and served several functions. A meta-analysis undertaken by Julian Sefton-Green (2006) found that in general, it has been commissioned and used by Creative Partnerships:

- to reflect on process with (in some cases) the aim of changing and improving delivery
- to describe and analyse impact, both in terms of quality and quantity
- as illustrative and advocacy material
- to establish and develop theoretical and conceptual understandings
- to meet the differing interests and needs of different audiences in terms of its focus on particular topics (e.g. built environment or emotional literacy)
- with a range of different metrics and methodologies, thus seeking to produce evidence based on a variety of values and framed in different languages.

Creative Partnerships acknowledges that there will always be a wide range of interests in this kind of work and it is quite proper that the different interests addressed by this material continue to meet this range of needs. But there is a greater need to pull together this material – some of which focuses on local audiences, or particular themes or aspects of programme delivery – and to reflect on the larger narrative it begins to describe.

To this end CP needs now and in the future simple accessible ‘stories’ which can exemplify its distinctiveness and purpose. At the same time, it needs data that demonstrate quality of delivery, fitness for purpose and value for money. These research summaries form an important component part of this ongoing process.





“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.”



# Creative Partnerships: Initiative and Impact

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Office for Standards in Education, 2006

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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 is stubborn, or the creative development and achievements of young people are 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.



“Young people who are known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities outperformed their peers in the same schools to a statistically significant extent at all three key stages.”

# Creative Partnerships Longer Term Tracking Study

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Anna Eames, Tom Benton, Caroline Sharp and Lesley Kendall,  
National Foundation for Educational Research, 2006

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The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) conducted a programme-level evaluation of Creative Partnerships between Autumn 2002 and Summer 2004 (Sharp et al. 2006). The programme-level evaluation focused on measuring the changes in self-confidence, self-esteem and attitudes to learning amongst young people who took part in Creative Partnerships activity. However the evaluation was not equipped to address the issues of the impact that involvement in Creative Partnerships may have on pupil performance. In consultation with Arts Council England, it was decided that the NFER should explore whether Creative Partnerships has had a significant positive impact on longer-term educational attainment.

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## Approach

NFER used the National Pupil Database (NPD) to explore the relationship between young people's attendance at Creative Partnerships activities and their progress in national assessments. The NPD is a 'data warehouse' which brings together information from the Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) and assessment data. It links pupil performance in key stage 1, 2 and 3 assessments to GCSE/GNVQ results. The NPD information for results obtained in 2003 and 2004 has been merged with pupil-level data that the NFER programme-level evaluation collected for a two-year period (see Eames et al. 2004, 2005a and 2005b).

The national evaluation focused on schools involved in Phase 1 of Creative Partnerships. It studied all 398 core schools selected by the first 16 Creative Partnerships areas in 2002 to launch the programme. These schools received significant investment in projects and programmes, hosted a broad range of projects designed to explore learning needs, capabilities and overall ambitions, and in many cases went on to become exemplars and advocates of Creative Partnerships work.

The attendance data was collected via 'attendance data sheets' which were distributed to schools taking part in the national evaluation. These were distributed on a termly basis and covered two academic years (2002/3 and 2003/4).

By combining the two datasets (the NPD and the NFER evaluation data) this study was able to provide a national dataset with pupils involved in Creative Partnerships flagged for each year. A statistical technique known as multilevel modelling<sup>1</sup> was used to examine whether there was a difference between those young people involved in Creative Partnerships and those not, when all relevant background factors are taken into account<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Multilevel modelling is a development of a common statistical technique known as 'regression analysis'. It is used for finding the relationship between a measure of interest and one or more other related variables.

<sup>2</sup> It was initially proposed to consider whether Creative Partnerships had had a significant impact on subject choice. However, it was not possible to investigate this because the pupils in the sample had made their GCSE subject choices before taking part in the Creative Partnerships activity. Therefore involvement in Creative Partnerships activity or attendance at a Creative Partnerships school could not have impacted upon young people's subject choices.

The evaluation involved young people from a wide range of year groups (from Foundation Stage to year 13). For this study, NFER grouped the young people in relation to the end of key stage assessments, as follows:

- For young people in Year 6, we compared progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 for those involved in Creative Partnerships and those not.
- For young people in Year 9, we looked at progress from key stage 2 to key stage 3.
- For young people in Year 11 we looked at progress from key stage 3 to GCSE.

This report presents the following information:

- A description of the sample of young people included in the analysis.
- The overall differences in performance and progress between young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities and other young people nationally.
- The overall differences in performance and progress between young people in Creative Partnerships schools and similar young people in non-Creative Partnerships schools nationally.
- The overall differences in performance and progress between young people in Creative Partnerships schools who were known to participate in Creative Partnerships activities and other young people in the same schools who were not known to attend Creative Partnerships activities.

### **Summary of the difference between young people known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities and other young people nationally**

- There was a statistically significant positive association between average progress in key stage 3 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people nationally. However, the effect size was small and cannot be said to be educationally significant.
- There was a statistically significant positive association between the progress in mathematics in key stage 3 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people nationally. However, the effect size was small and cannot be said to be educationally significant.
- There was a statistically significant positive association between the progress in science in key stage 3 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people in nationally. However, the effect size was small and cannot be said to be educationally significant.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the progress in English at key stage 3 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities compared to similar young people nationally.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the progress of young people in key stage 2 or key stage 4 who had attended Creative Partnerships activities compared to similar young people nationally.

### **Summary of the difference between young people who attended Creative partnerships schools and young people in other schools**

- There was a statistically significant negative association between average progress, progress in English and progress in science in key stage 2 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships schools but were not known to have taken part in Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people in other schools. However, the effect size was small and cannot be said to be educationally significant.
- There was no statistically significant difference between progress in mathematics in key stage 2 of young people who attended Creative Partnerships schools but were not known to have taken part in Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people in other schools.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the progress of young people in key stage 3 or key stage 4 who had attended Creative Partnerships schools but were not known to have taken part in Creative Partnerships activities, compared to similar young people in other schools.

### **Summary of the difference between young people known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities and other young people in the same schools**

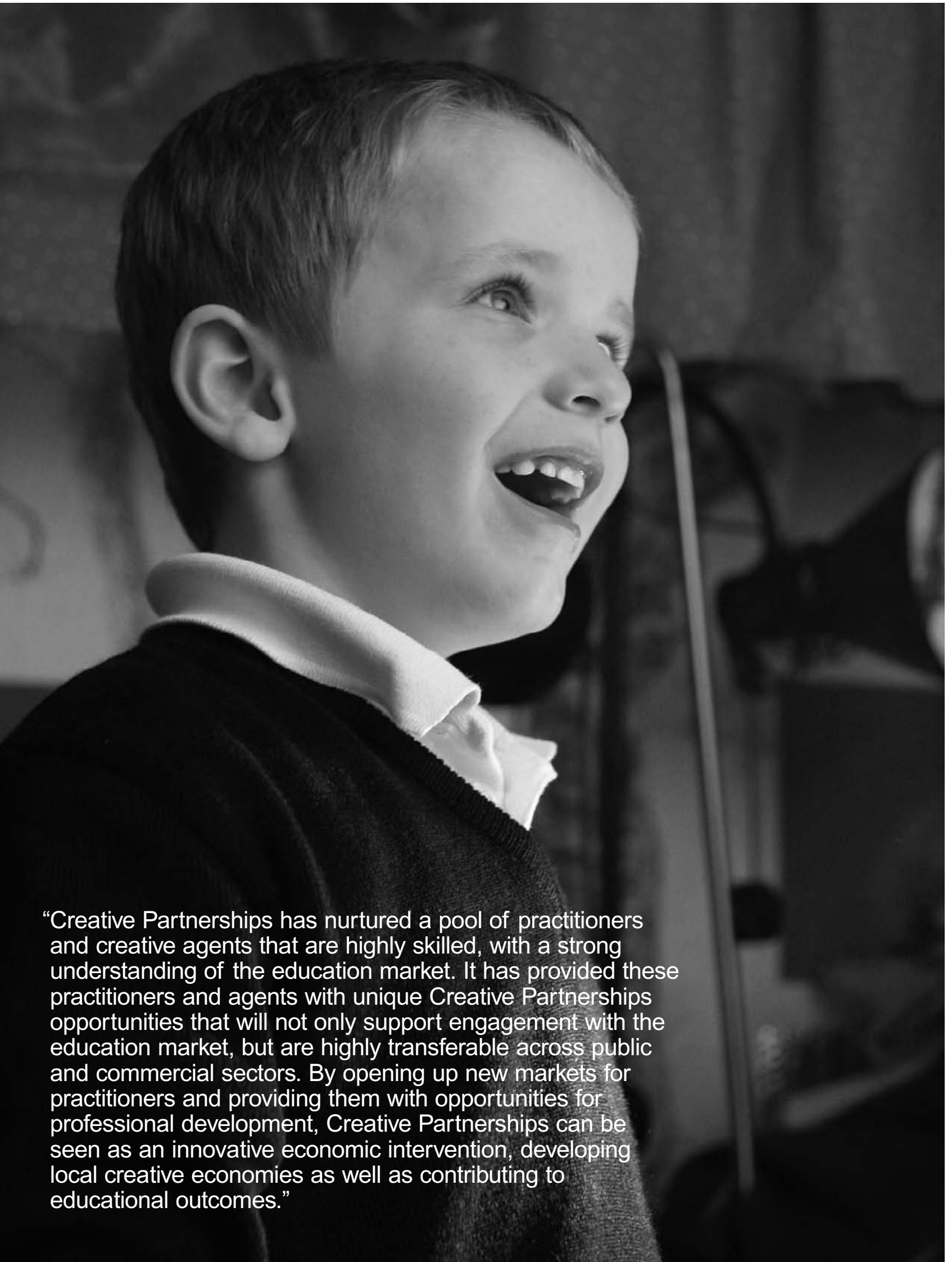
- Young people known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities out-performed those in the same schools (but not known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities) to a statistically significant extent at all three key stages. This was evident in average scores, English, mathematics and science in key stages 2 and 3 and in total points scores, best 8 points scores and science at key stage 4 (but not in English or mathematics). However, the effect sizes were small and the observed differences cannot be said to be educationally significant.

### **Conclusion**

An analysis of the sample characteristics showed that, compared with the national population, the initiative has reached schools serving more disadvantaged communities, and with a higher proportion of people from diverse minority ethnic backgrounds. At school level, however, the young people who attended Creative Partnerships activities tended to be less disadvantaged than those in the same schools – in terms of having a statement of special educational needs, eligibility for free school meals (at key stages 2 and 3) and prior attainment.

When compared with national data, the analysis of young people's progress showed no evidence of an impact of attending Creative Partnerships activities at key stage 2 or key stage 4 and a very small positive impact at key stage 3.

An analysis of within-school data revealed that young people who are known to have attended Creative Partnerships activities outperformed their peers in the same schools to a statistically significant extent at all three key stages.



“Creative Partnerships has nurtured a pool of practitioners and creative agents that are highly skilled, with a strong understanding of the education market. It has provided these practitioners and agents with unique Creative Partnerships opportunities that will not only support engagement with the education market, but are highly transferable across public and commercial sectors. By opening up new markets for practitioners and providing them with opportunities for professional development, Creative Partnerships can be seen as an innovative economic intervention, developing local creative economies as well as contributing to educational outcomes.”



# Investing in the creative and cultural economies – the impact of Creative Partnerships

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Paul Owens, Richard Naylor and Laura Clayton, Burns Owens Partnership, 2006

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The creative and cultural industries are seen as increasingly important for economic development in the UK. Skills such as team-working, communication and presentation are highly developed in many creative industries and such skills are increasingly sought-after throughout the economy. The ways of working and attitudes that are characteristic of the creative and cultural sectors (such as creative thinking, flexibility, autonomy, commitment and enthusiasm) are also in demand. Creative Partnerships was set up by the Government in 2002 to ensure that these qualities are developed and harnessed throughout the education system. In setting out to achieve this goal, Creative Partnerships has invested heavily in the UK creative economy (almost £20m per annum).

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To find out the impact of Creative Partnerships' investment in the creative economy, researchers conducted an online survey of 300 creative practitioners with experience of working with Creative Partnerships. They also carried out an in-depth study of 12 Creative Partnerships offices from a cross-section of geographic, urban and rural backgrounds, which involved focus groups with 51 office staff, and with 56 creative practitioners, and random telephone interviews with 42 creative practitioners. Creative Partnerships offices' expenditure reports were examined for patterns, including the proportion of spend on the creative economy and the types of creative practitioners focused upon.

The study found that the activities and expenditure of Creative Partnerships offices have had a significant impact upon individual practitioners and businesses, especially the core group around each office. The main impacts were increased income, the development of transferable skills, enhanced creative practice and increased access to new markets. The study also found evidence of wider impact on local and regional creative and cultural economies, created through sub-contracting work to freelancers, developing networks and increasing access to new markets. The impact has been felt across the UK, not just in areas such as London and the South East which have the greatest concentration of creative practitioners.



## Who has Creative Partnerships worked with?

In total, approximately 3,500 creative practitioners have been contracted directly by Creative Partnerships. On top of this figure are freelancers, sub-contracted by many organisations to carry out the Creative Partnerships work. All Creative Partnerships areas began the process of recruitment with a wide and open trawl of existing practitioners and organisations, usually by advertising opportunities. As the programme evolved, Creative Partnerships developed a core list of practitioners who had a strong, detailed understanding of the programme. The Creative Partnerships offices tended to work with practitioners in visual arts, performing arts, film and video. Just under two thirds of the individual creative practitioners engaged by Creative Partnerships were freelancers, a group that in the past has received no funding because it is challenging to engage. Creative Partnerships has also worked with a large number of new organisations that have not previously received direct funding.

## How has Creative Partnerships impacted on creative practitioners and businesses?

Involvement with the programme has provided practitioners and businesses with:

- Financial stability – Creative Partnerships offered practitioners long-term projects that provide a sense of security. Three quarters of the respondents stated that their turnover or income had increased since working with Creative Partnerships.
- Skills development – Creative Partnerships has provided informal, on-the-job based business skills development. Practitioners have also been required to develop consultancy and change management skills. Those working as ‘creative agents’ have developed the skills required for bringing about change within the school curriculum. They have also developed project management and school liaison skills. Such skills are highly transferable and help practitioners to better understand and respond to the needs of their clients, both within and outside of the education sector.
- Training – most (55%) of the practitioners had been offered formal training by Creative Partnerships usually in the form of structured training days, conferences and networking events. Just under a third had taken part in dedicated Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses and 14% had taken part in mentoring schemes.

### Lorna Rose, Birmingham

Lorna Rose is a visual artist who uses inspiration from the ‘Reggio philosophy’ to facilitate creative exploration. She reported two key benefits from her work with Creative Partnerships. First and foremost, Creative Partnerships Birmingham provided her with an element of stability. Work is paid for ‘up front’, and three days a week are guaranteed throughout the life of the project. But the most significant benefit for Lorna has been the ability to access new markets. As a result, Lorna secured non Creative Partnerships funding for two days a week in one of the nurseries she worked for as part of the programme.

- Access to clients – Creative Partnerships has equipped practitioners with a better understanding of the education market. As well as raising awareness to new markets, Creative Partnerships has provided practitioners with an opportunity to test current and future creative pieces. Usually, practitioners have little room or time for experimenting with new techniques or processes because they are concerned about maintaining cash flow.

But practitioners have not benefited equally from their involvement with the programme. For example, on average, each Creative Partnerships office spent 48% of its creative and cultural spend on just 9% of its practitioners.

### **How has Creative Partnerships impacted on the wider creative economy?**

The study found some evidence of impact on the wider creative economy through:

- Sub-contracting – although the majority of Creative Partnerships investment tended to concentrate upon a core of practitioners, a ripple effect could be seen via the use of freelancers to deliver work. Over half (54%) of the respondents said they used freelancers.
- Networks – Creative Partnerships’ efforts to engender and encourage a collaborative approach to creative programmes has not only led to an enrichment of practice, but to a longer-term network of relationships that should support practitioners in their future work. Of those respondents who had gained new work as a result of involvement with the programme, 69% stated that this was a result of access to networks.
- New markets – working in education has, to some extent, raised awareness of the potential of the education market to provide rewarding and challenging work. It has also raised creative practitioners’ awareness, to some extent, of opportunities to work in new markets. Some practitioners have begun to access education based work not funded through Creative Partnerships, or are developing products and services that might target this market in the future. For 36% of the respondents, Creative Partnerships has contributed to further non-Creative Partnerships work, although the additional work accounts for less than 10% of their turnover.

#### **Punch Records, Birmingham**

Punch Records, founded in 1996 and based in Birmingham, specialise in educational music activities for young people. They offer workshops on Dj-ing, Mc-ing, percussion and other musical skills. One key benefit for Punch Records has been the ability to get on the “radar” of arts education, thereby providing a road into new markets. Punch Records started with just two employees. However, as a direct result of Creative Partnerships work, the company has been able to employ four more full-time staff, with two of these positions provided for artists. As a result of their new insight into the education market, Punch records have started to adapt their products and services to meet the needs of the wider education market. The company has developed a “maths and music” programme that can be used outside of the Creative Partnerships programme.



“The majority of coordinators agreed that Creative Partnerships had helped staff in all respects to express their own creativity (82%), identify and develop each young person’s talents (82%) and believe that developing young people’s creativity is important (90%).”

# Continuing Professional Development for teachers and creative practitioners: a national evaluation of Creative Partnerships

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David Wood, Westminster Institute of Education, Oxford Brookes University, 2005

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This study evaluated the effects of Creative Partnerships initiatives on the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers and creative practitioners across England. Data was collected from a variety of sources including visits to 11 Creative Partnerships, interviews with key personnel, a questionnaire, and existing evaluations, documents, reports and publications.

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The study found a rich variety of CPD activity taking place throughout Creative Partnerships. It included short courses, networking events and action research. The activity yielded many high quality materials. Whilst many of the projects were designed to have impact, and data was gathered regularly, unfortunately, the written accounts focused more on outputs and did not always make the nature of the activity or its impact clear.

Most participants felt that teachers gained most from reflective enquiry and most Creative Partnerships built action research projects into their plans. Teachers tended to lack confidence about using traditional forms of academic research and welcomed mentoring from experienced researchers.

There was a widespread belief that fewer CPD opportunities were offered to creative practitioners than teachers, but the evidence did not support this view. A similar proportion of CPD was offered to both the creative and educational community, although the study found that little was targeted specifically at school leaders and special educational needs.

## How was the CPD targeted?

Around 35% of the CPD was designed specifically for creative practitioners, 40% was directed at teachers generally and a further 18% at schools. Headteachers, newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants accounted for another 7%. Some CPD was offered for both teachers and creative practitioners.

One project for example, was directed at advanced skills teachers and 'advanced skills creative practitioners'. This group of creative practitioners acted as development facilitators, investigating needs and supporting projects.

Another project involved regular 'creative gatherings' of 85 creative practitioners. The creative practitioners reported that Creative Partnerships itself had not been a source of professional development – their main source of CPD was "on-the-job" – but it had offered them the time and the opportunity to source it themselves.

Four Creative Partnerships staged regular, semi-formal seminars and meetings, sometimes with a speaker, to bring together as many creative practitioners and teachers as possible. The attendees welcomed the informal networking opportunities offered by this sort of event.

Only a small proportion of the CPD projects targeted school leaders. Where they did, there was strong evidence that the commitment of school leaders was a critical factor in effective CPD activity and a pivotal force for sustaining creative learning and teaching in schools:

“Creative Partnerships has utterly changed our perception and understanding of how children learn. So we’ve taken on several initiatives that we have as a whole school now... it’s changed our curriculum, it’s changed our teaching and learning styles, it has brought in people who are experts, but not teachers and it’s raised our delivery and attainment of those subjects.” (Head teacher)

### **How did teachers, schools and creative practitioners benefit from the CPD?**

Teachers and creative practitioners talked positively about the impact of the CPD initiatives. Creative practitioners commented on an increased understanding of education, educational language, key issues in education, learning processes, planning, monitoring and evaluation. They felt more realistic about schools’ needs and able to discuss and liaise better with schools. Several Partnerships mentioned the opportunities that were available for creative practitioners to develop their skills (by shadowing and mentoring, for instance) and also for teachers and creative practitioners to plan and evaluate together.

Teachers spoke in general terms of “increased risk-taking”, “higher motivation”, “greater confidence”, “opportunities for reflection”. They also spoke of specific benefits, such as “developed personalised learning skills” and “arts integration into curriculum”; although it was not always clear how teaching had become more creative. Teachers and creative practitioners also benefited from engaging in debates about key concepts, such as ‘creativity’, ‘creative teaching’, ‘creative learning’ and ‘culture’. The study noted how dissemination of frameworks and definitions of the key concepts could have helped inform these debates.

The most effective form of CPD was where teachers and creative practitioners engaged in reflective practice, action research and classroom enquiry. An example of this kind of initiative was ‘The Creative Action Research Awards’ (CARA) which made small grants available to teachers and creative practitioners to conduct action research into an aspect of creativity. Each partnership was allocated a mentor experienced in research methods, who supported and advised on the research. A useful element of each project was a study of the impact on pupil learning. Participants commented how CARA provided:

“A stronger... more inclusive’ model than cascaded INSET as it could be tailored to the needs of different practitioners. It was ‘more relevant’, ‘more empowering’, and had a ‘greater and longer term impact.’”



## What kind of CPD materials were created?

A range of stimulating materials was created during the projects. The materials were designed to enable teachers to discover and describe creative learning and teaching through their own experience, reflection, discussion and debate with colleagues:

“People have got to engage with it and experience it in some way; reflect on that process themselves and then draw out of it what that could mean for how children learn and how I teach. A number of times on earlier drafts we had what teachers should and shouldn't do and we deliberately took them out. People have to wrestle and engage with their own creativity otherwise it's meaningless. We really tried to get away from the cascade model of CPD. The feedback we got from Advanced Skilled Teachers is that it changed their thinking.”

Some projects introduced teachers to existing materials and approaches which could be adapted to the aims of Creative Partnerships. For example, an established research tool from a university, an approach to world music based on Sierra Leone and an approach to early years practice from Reggio Emilia in Italy.

### **The apprenticeship matrix and cycle model**

One Creative Partnership, in collaboration with a higher education institution, used an apprenticeship model of creative learning to develop its programme. The apprenticeship matrix and cycle model was used as a tool for identifying the type of learning which takes place when creative practitioners, teachers and pupils plan and work alongside each other. It included a cycle of shared development which moved the learner from the position of observer through to independent creator, and a matrix that demonstrated how all the participants learned by working together. The approach created a learning framework for professional development to take place and be sustained within schools and Creative Partnerships clusters. It had a positive impact on teachers' self-confidence and influenced the development of creative ideas in teaching and learning alongside growth in reflective practice.

“The project has been one of our highlights this year... it being a longer project was great, all the strands, doing something real... it’s been remarkably special.”

“It has been a privilege to work in this partnership and it has impacted on me as an individual and as a professional.”

“When I look at the school before CARA and now, well, we’re totally different.”





# The Creativity Action Research Awards Scheme. Who benefited and what did they gain?

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Louise Comeford Boyes, Unit for Educational Research  
Evaluation, University of Bradford, 2005

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This study set out to evaluate the Creative Action Research Award (CARA) Scheme, led by CAPE UK. The CARA scheme involved 145 schools and more than 100 creative practitioners in 104 partnerships across England in the first round. As well as benefiting pupil learning, the scheme aimed to enhance practitioners' understanding of how creative learning works in practice. To achieve this, the scheme provided practitioners with the opportunity of engaging in practical, classroom-based Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Practitioners used action research to investigate and reflect on the processes, evidence and outcomes of their projects. They were supported in carrying out their investigations by a network of 52 mentors drawn mainly from higher education.

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Researchers collected the experiences, reflections and perspectives of 175 teachers, creative practitioners and mentors, together with details of their project outcomes and impacts through questionnaires and interviews. In a follow-up study conducted one year later, 25 teachers, headteachers and creative partners from 20 of the schools involved in the original study were interviewed about the long-term impact of the programme.

The study found that practitioners were highly enthusiastic about the CARA scheme and it was successful in many ways. The many positive outcomes for pupils encompassed creative, personal, social and curricular learning and development. For adults, CARA was a good way of providing CPD. Many practitioners found engaging in action research a challenging experience with a steep learning curve and they valued the expertise and support provided by their mentor.

There was evidence too that the scheme had a lasting impact on the staff involved, the pupils and the schools and many reported that the effects of the scheme had spread to other teachers and schools.

## How did pupils gain from the action research projects?

Virtually all (99%) of the teachers, creative practitioners and mentors were very positive about the impact of the projects on pupils. They reported benefits in the areas of:

- Creative learning – pupils were more able to ask questions, pose challenges and confront misconceptions, provide learning opportunities for others, make connections, take risks and solve problems.
- Personal and social skills – pupils gained greater self-esteem and confidence, showed themselves to be very supportive of each other and co-operated well.

- Work ethic – pupils demonstrated greater engagement and motivation and behaviour was noticeably better. They were more committed, persevered more and showed greater independence.
- Curricular attainment and skills – pupils improved their ability to research, investigate, capture data and draw conclusions from it. In some instances, there was a rise in attainment, which was attributed to the project.

### **What professional development opportunities did the scheme provide?**

The individual projects impacted on the adults in many tangible ways. 90% of teachers and creative practitioners made CPD gains from taking part in the project, whilst 53% of mentors talked about the learning gains they had made from working with the partnerships and the schools.

The opportunities for teachers included:

- action research knowledge, including more purposeful observation and analytic skills
- specific artform and technical skills learning
- the chance to engage with open-ended work and see the advantages of the process rather than the product
- the chance to take risks in a supportive space
- increased confidence and rejuvenation.

For creative practitioners, CPD opportunities included:

- a chance to become acquainted (or reacquainted) with school contexts
- learning research and data capture skills
- learning how to manage pupils and enhance their own delivery.

For mentors, CPD opportunities included:

- a chance to become acquainted or reacquainted with school contexts
- a better understanding of the creative sector and its potential gain for education
- learning how to communicate about research to professionals from other sectors clearly.

Practitioners suggested a number of reasons for why CARA was a successful model for CPD, including that it provided a stronger, more inclusive model than cascaded inset because it could be tailored to the needs of different practitioners and schools. They found it “more relevant”, “more empowering”, and “more exciting”.

## How successful were the action research projects?

Most teachers and creative practitioners (81%) felt that their action research had been successful, or at least partially successful. (No-one stated that their research had been completely unsuccessful, but some did not comment). Many reflected that there were aspects they would do differently another time. In particular, they would avoid trying to collect too much data. Other improvements they would make included gathering baseline data that was properly related to the research question, and using more effective measures for capturing creative development than assessment scores.

That most teachers and creative practitioners (63%) did not have prior experience of carrying out action research, yet most thought that their investigation had been successful, showed the importance of the support they received. The aspects that practitioners found most helpful were:

- having enough time for reflection
- being able to use familiar methods to good effect, such as structured observations and thoughtful diary work
- having expert input from mentors throughout.

One teacher for example, commented how:

“The job of the mentor is to give confidence and to support. Their input was always positive. We were able to meet before the project started... their advice was important as I'd never done research before. They came up with practical support, and the face-to-face visits made it much more intimate.”

## What factors contributed to the success of the scheme?

The research highlighted four key factors that contributed to CARA's success:

- Good relationships within the partnerships – all of the CARA partnerships came out of pre-existing relationships, usually between the school and the creative partner, but occasionally between the mentor and the school or creative partner. This meant that individuals already felt comfortable with, and able to trust, each other
- A carefully planned framework for the project that has enough flexibility to allow pupils to contribute, own and/or even lead the project, depending on their starting point and how the project develops. Having a structure to pull pupils back if necessary is important too
- Genuine support of the senior management team and colleagues is crucial to helping the project run smoothly
- Good organisation and clearly defined project leadership, with open lines of communication and meetings of a useful frequency.

## What changes were apparent after the programme had finished?

There was evidence that the scheme had a long-lasting and far reaching impact, including:

- a long-term change in some pupils. For example, some pupils had improved confidence and self-esteem, were better able to manage and organise themselves, and had developed an interest in the subject that the CARA work had been based around, to the extent that some had gone on to take GCSEs that they would not otherwise have chosen.
- CARA had stimulated sustained activity. Close to half the schools had either repeated the original project or supported school-wide adoption of the CARA practice.
- an impact on the professional development of the teachers and creative practitioners involved. For example, they felt better skilled, more creative, more confident about taking risks, better able to manage project work and more open to working in partnership.
- an impact on the practice of others in the school. For example, other staff showed a broadening awareness of what creativity is and how to use creative approaches, but the schools suggested that for deeper learning to occur, teachers would need to experience the processes for themselves.
- some school-wide change. Many schools talked of changes to practice and policy, such as thinking differently about previously invisible groups of pupils and fostering more links between classes, departments and schools. Schools also reported that creative practice generally was enhanced.
- ongoing work with creative partners. Some schools were continuing to work with the original creative practitioner and in one case she had become a member of staff. Some schools had forged relationships with new partners.
- an impact on others in 'non-CARA' schools via networks. Some schools simply shared their CARA work with other schools in local partnerships and networks, telling the story of their project. Sometimes schools shared ideas and techniques in a practical way, via workshops.
- some teachers were more skilled at action research. A minority of schools felt they were moving towards being communities of practice.







# Progression in creative learning through Creative Partnerships

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Anna Craft, Exeter University; Pamela Burnard, Cambridge University; Teresa Grainger, Canterbury Christ Church University; Kerry Chappel; Open University, 2006

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This study set out to characterise and explore progression in creative learning in two specific areas of the curriculum: musical and written composition. It examined exemplary cases of teaching practices from foundation stage to key stage 4.

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The researchers worked with seven teachers and collected a range of data including video and audio recordings, observation with field notes, informal interviews, school documentation, and digital photographs which they used as a focus for exploration with both pupils and teachers. They also carried out case studies of individual children from the high, middle and low achievement levels of each year group. The researchers used a range of elements to explore the nature of progression in creative learning, including the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) framework.

## How was creative learning characterised over the study?

The researchers explored how creative learning developed pupils' capacity for imaginative activity and led to original and valuable musical and written compositions. A key finding of the study was that creative learning was evidenced in the act of producing knowledge. The researchers noted how:

- imaginative activity increased in depth, but narrowed in scope, over the key stages. In FS, KS1 and KS2, imaginative activity took place during play. It became increasingly subject-specific at KS3 and KS4
- English and musical compositions shifted from those arising from direct playful involvement with writing and musical materials in FS and KS1, to creating, perceiving, making and doing in KS1-2, then to perceiving, making and, in the case of music, performing, in KS3-4
- originality was not focused upon overtly until KS3 and KS4. At these stages, teachers expected and gave students the opportunity to review their own work, and built their capacity to do so
- teachers of FS, KS1 and KS2 children saw creative learning as playing a formative role in child development. By contrast, KS3 and KS4 teachers saw the value of creative learning as being grounded in a depth of understanding and application of knowledge and skills.

Creative learning became increasingly focused on experimentation through the key stages. There was also a shift in balance between group and individual creativity. Co-participation between children, and between children and teacher, was evident at FS, KS1 and KS2, but at KS2 to KS3 co-participation was seen as an opportunity to work together rather than as a process of co-owning ideas. The balance teachers struck between 'freedom' and 'structure' changed across the key stages too. Teachers gave younger learners the freedom to explore possibilities and intervened sensitively. Increasingly, teachers controlled the structure of the learning, often through modelling.



## How did pupils' creative learning progress over the key stages?

There was evidence of children at every key stage showing the elements of the QCA framework. They asked questions, made connections, generated ideas, explored options and evaluated their work, but there were some marked differences between the age groups.

### Asking questions

The asking of questions was less visible in the younger learners, but was embodied within the children's thinking, explorations and play. The researchers suggested that the nature of the tasks they were given may have meant that younger children tended to ask themselves questions internally. Learners at key stages 3 and 4 worked more collaboratively, debating and interrogating one another's ideas through questioning, so that their individual compositions were informed by the views of others.

### Making connections

Making connections was a core feature of how the children saw themselves as composers in music and as writers in English, but they made connections in different ways. Whilst younger learners made connections between their experiences at home and school, the connections pupils made toward the end of KS2 and in KS3/4, related more closely to literacy and music.

### Generating ideas

Children were encouraged in both English and music to generate ideas and envisage alternatives, moving from a multimodal space where their own ideas were generated, to one in KS3/4 where imagining was much less multimodal, particularly in writing.

### Exploring options

In both music and English composition, learners from FS to KS2 were immersed in hands-on exploration of ideas. Composition tended to be completed in one sitting. Towards the end of KS2, composition started to involve greater drafting, reviewing, revisiting and selecting strategies to improve work in a more sustained way. This approach was developed further in KS3 and KS4.

### Critical reflection

Learners at all key stages engaged in critical reflection of their work. Even the youngest learners were aware of the quality of their own ideas and those of their peers in writing. KS1 pupils were able to analyse their writing in terms of why they had chosen words or phrases or what was better about their writing. By KS3/4, learners were able to reflect on the work of their peers and revise their own work as a result of critical reflection. In music, reflective activity was not always 'critical' at FS – KS2. Critical reflection became more pronounced in KS3/4 and distributed among peers.

## How did teachers' views of creative learning affect progression in creative learning?

The study noted how teacher stance was an important influential factor, particularly teachers' stances towards knowledge and learning, the curriculum, and creativity and creative learning. Teachers recognised and encouraged the creative learning needs of their pupils in different ways according to key stage.

### Teachers' stance towards knowledge and learning

Foundation Stage teachers held a strongly child-centred perspective, and teachers of younger learners tended towards hands-on and collaborative learning. KS3 and KS 4 teachers were more skills oriented in both written and musical composition.

### Teachers' stance towards creativity and creative learning

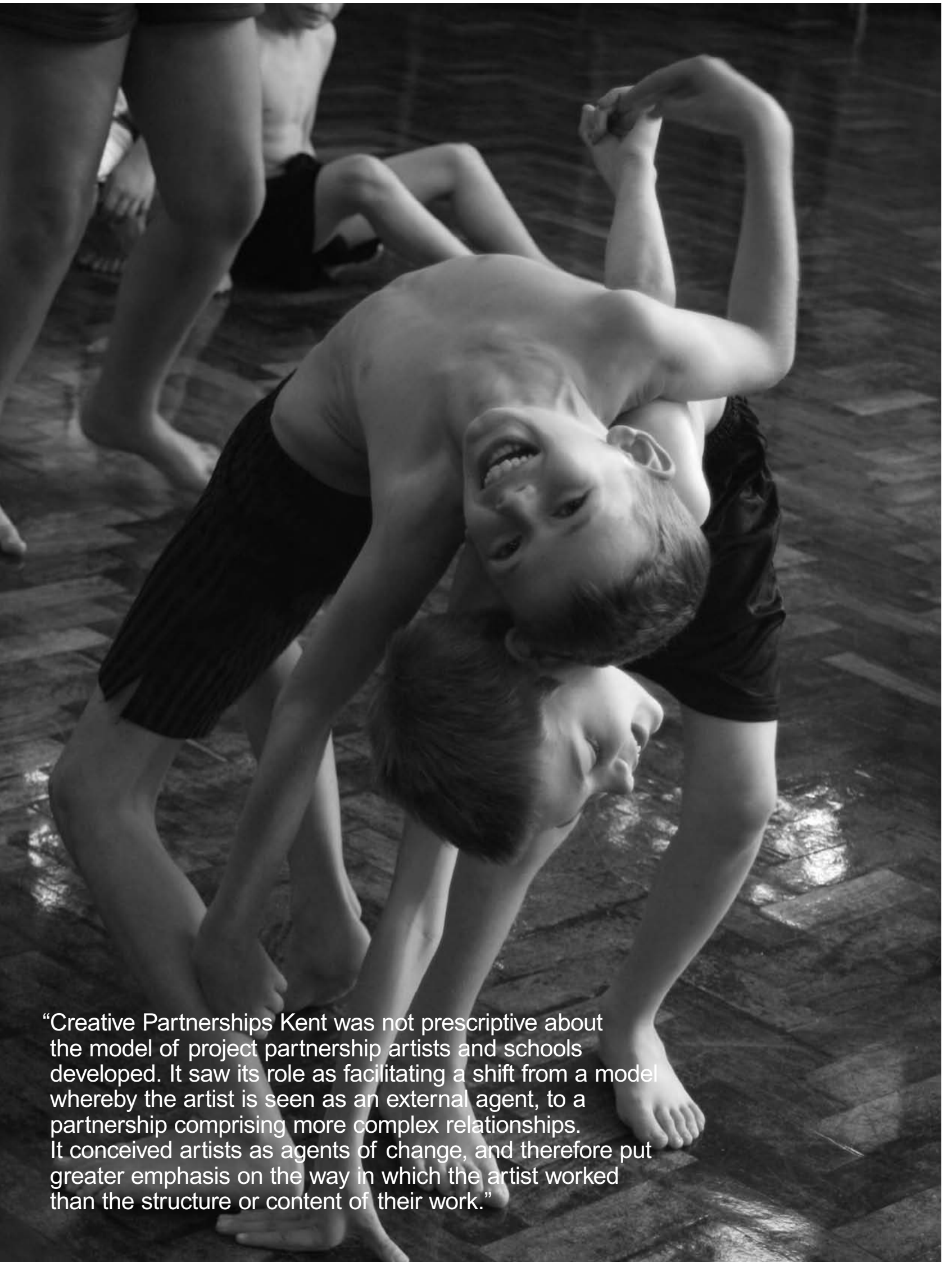
Teachers of younger learners tended to see creative learning as part of the formative role of children's development. Teachers across the key stages viewed progression as grounded in having the time to understand each learner as an individual and increasing each learner's understanding and application of knowledge and skills.

### Teachers' stance towards the curriculum

Up until the end of KS2, teachers viewed the curriculum as cross-curricular and were largely positive about the national curriculum. They saw it as dynamic and having potential. KS3 and 4 teachers tended to view the national curriculum as 'problematic and restrictive' time- and content-wise in English, and felt there was a strong emphasis on exam preparation in music.

### Teachers' stance towards teaching for creativity and creative learning

Across all key stages, teachers emphasised striking a balance between structure and freedom. Teachers of younger learners used discovery approaches. They set structures and boundaries in ways that encouraged pupils to explore possibilities, and when they intervened, teachers were careful not to interrupt pupils' flow of ideas. Teachers of older learners related structure to subject specific knowledge and skills, and took more control, giving the learners less independence. Teachers' structures were tightest at the beginning of KS3, but they gave students greater freedom towards the end of KS4.



“Creative Partnerships Kent was not prescriptive about the model of project partnership artists and schools developed. It saw its role as facilitating a shift from a model whereby the artist is seen as an external agent, to a partnership comprising more complex relationships. It conceived artists as agents of change, and therefore put greater emphasis on the way in which the artist worked than the structure or content of their work.”

# Agents in change: A qualitative evaluation of Creative Partnerships Kent 2003/2004

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Caroline Blunt, freelance researcher, 2004

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This study explored ways that Creative Partnerships worked in Kent, examining primarily the processes involved, rather than the outcomes. Creative Partnerships Kent saw itself as a bridge between artists and schools which involved an ongoing process of negotiation and support. It selected artists through holding conversations with them to determine their 'readiness for partnership' rather than a 'readiness for contract'. It selected schools to take part, rather than asked schools to volunteer, and aimed to create 'tailor made' project partnerships that addressed the needs and priorities of the schools. Creative Partnerships Kent communicated its aims and objectives with the partnerships through newsletters, conversations, meetings and events to help individual partnerships see how they fitted into the bigger picture.

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The study gathered evidence through visits and interviews with teams involved with 16 Creative Partnership projects across Kent, observation of project activities, questionnaires sent to all artists, headteachers and coordinators, interviews and written documents.

The study identified two main types of partnership based on an analysis of the artists' way of working and the level of teacher involvement across all the projects. The teachers and artists distinguished several key features of successful partnerships. These included:

- both parties were learning
- ideas were not imposed
- their relationship was defined by give and take and hard work.

The study provided several case study examples of project partnerships that illustrated the processes at work.

## How did the artists and teachers work together?

In all the projects, the artists worked as instructors/facilitators. They helped pupils and teachers to make and/or present their own work, for example by demonstrating techniques and working alongside pupils and teachers. Several artists combined instruction with making a piece of work on school premises and/or presenting a piece of completed work to the school. The artists never worked solely as makers or presenters.

In most of the projects, teachers worked with the artist to plan a project and then were closely involved in forming its content. In some projects, the teachers were less involved – they provided the artists with support and help with planning, or helped with planning and took part in the activities, but they did not have an input into the project's content.

## What were the key features of successful partnerships in the teachers' and artists' view?

### Both parties learning

Teachers and artists agreed that for the partnership to be real, both parties had to be willing and aiming to learn something:

"I've always thought that the artist is going to learn something as well."

"(The partnership structure is one) to which everybody brings something."

"Not imposing ideas."

One teacher explained her fear that the artist would impose his ideas on the school:

"I wondered whether he would expect us to dance to his tune, but he really adapted the way that he approached us."

An artist explained how his work in the project contrasted with his previous way of working:

"I've always gone in with an idea which is fixed. 'Would you like to do this idea that I've thought of? No or Yes? But, 'Would you like to help fashion a project?' That's a completely different thing, isn't it?"

"Give and take."

Although artists emphasised the importance of not going into school with fixed ideas, there was also a feeling that the partnership did not always have to be based on absolute equality. One primary school teacher, for example, felt that her school's partnership had worked well because:

"They've (the artists) actually led it. They've asked for our ideas then they've run away with it and done stuff... I think that partnership is an appropriate word for that way of working."

"Hard work."

The demands of working in partnerships were felt by both teachers and artists. A teacher commented:

"If you think (it's about) artists coming in to do the work for you, you're wrong... it's not that... there are pots of opportunities, but that equals lots more work... That's if you want to get the best out of it."

An artistic director said that she had:

"Never done so much administration before in terms of keeping everybody informed or updating people on meetings."

An artist reflected on how the openness and flexibility offered by this way of working was fantastic, but it was also unnervingly demanding:

"That's where I have sleepless nights because I think yeah, I am free to do what I like, but it's got to deliver, it has to deliver something, it has to change somebody's life."

### **East Kent Spy – the ‘Thaneteen’ website**

This project tallied with the school's desire to find a use for a room in the school, develop its ICT resources and provide activities for students that would develop their interpersonal skills and motivation to learn. A group of 20 year 11 students worked for two terms with practitioners from an arts organisation and school staff to create a website of social activities for teenagers in their area. Each student was given specific responsibilities such as marketing, sponsorship, website links, a games section, buttons and menus. A flash animation expert and a person experienced in campaigning strategies were also brought in to work with the students. The students and facilitators were very positive about their experience of this different way of working:

“It makes you want to work rather than you feel like you're being forced to. It's a lot more our ideas rather than what they're telling us to do.”

“We've really enjoyed the difference in the attitude and enthusiasm of the students from the beginning to now. We've developed a fantastic relationship with the students and with the teachers in the school. We've also had lots of fun. I mean it really has been a lot of fun. And it's been great to see people kind of picking things up and actually you know, being better than us at things!”



“Perhaps the most surprising outcome is that a simple mechanism, ‘Steering Groups’, had such far-reaching effects and was perceived to contribute much to the overall success of the projects.”





# Building links and networks: Changing patterns of collaboration within and between schools in Creative Partnerships Birmingham

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Karen Chantry Wood, University of Central England, 2004

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This study set out to investigate how working with a creative organisation impacted on the nature of the collaboration that occurred within and between the schools. It focused on two clusters of schools. One cluster worked with an organisation called artSites, the other worked with the Birmingham Royal Ballet. In the artSites cluster, creative practitioners worked on a variety of different creative projects, both with individual schools and jointly with several schools. The schools in the other cluster worked with the Birmingham Royal Ballet for 18 months on a production called 'Safahr'.

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The projects were observed in seven schools over eight months. Altogether, 45 semi-structured interviews were carried out with headteachers, co-ordinators, teachers, teaching assistants, parents, and children from the schools, and project managers from the partner organisations. Paper based evidence (such as project planning documents, final reports, children's written work, practical art and creative work) was also collected.

The study found that both models of working with creative partners were successful. It also found that effective collaboration cut across ages, phases, and curriculum areas. Staff of different ages, training and expertise worked in new groupings, sharing ideas and knowledge, to develop the children's creative experiences. For most staff, this was a new and exciting experience. These changed patterns of collaboration appeared to develop through the strong support and leadership offered by the projects' steering groups.

## How did collaboration within schools change?

Before the Creative Partnerships project, within-school collaborations in primary schools had been limited to teachers planning work together in year groups for literacy and numeracy. With the Creative Partnerships projects, staff worked in a variety of different combinations involving children across age groups and classes.

Whilst previous projects within secondary schools, had tended to be directed at particular year groups in particular curriculum areas, collaboration in the Creative Partnerships projects developed between curriculum areas. For example, a group of visual arts students worked with a group of science students to create a set of visual and interactive pieces of artwork based on science concepts which were displayed in a corridor. As well as creating an aesthetically pleasing environment, the teachers used the art pieces to stimulate discussions and revise science concepts with all year groups.

Where secondary schools were involved with joint projects with other schools in their cluster, their within-school collaboration involved different curriculum areas working on various aspects of the joint activity. For example, in one school, the Design and Technology department became responsible for set design, the Art and Textile department for costumes, the Music department for composition, the English department for stories and poems and the Dance department for dances. Teachers and students met together to check on progress and to share with each other how the project was developing. These kinds of collaborations (between curriculum areas, year groups or teachers) had not existed before the Creative Partnerships project.

The success of the within school collaborations created increased staff confidence, engendered larger ideas and more risk-taking, and led to schools building wider relationships. For example, a special school collaborated with the creators of Makaton (a signing language) to create 130 new signs to aid the teaching of creativity. In another school, the sheer scale of the vision staff had for a sensory garden meant they approached a local secondary school for help with developing electrical switches and other items they could not make themselves.

### **How did collaboration between schools change?**

Before the Creative Partnerships project, the links that existed between schools had usually been between secondary schools and their feeder primary schools, and the links had only operated at headteacher or senior management level. Class teachers and children were rarely involved. With the Creative Partnerships projects, schools worked in a variety of combinations, from twos and threes to everyone in the cluster taking part in a large joint project. Sometimes these collaborations just involved sharing a creative practitioner to do similar work in two or three schools, with the teachers getting together to plan and share ideas. In other cases, teachers actively shared year groups, which involved teachers taking groups of children to other schools to take part in events or to practice for some of the larger joint events. Sometimes it simply involved being the audience for another school or set of schools' event.

## How did the steering groups help to build successful collaborative relationships?

The participants felt that the effective practices of collaboration within and between schools had been created and developed through the steering groups. The steering group meetings were important because they encouraged a new set of relationships to develop at class teacher level. Teachers who met each other through the meetings said they considered one another “more as friends than colleagues”. The regularity of the steering group meetings provided the teachers with support and engendered mutual respect. The meetings also encouraged a ‘can do’ attitude and an environment where it was acceptable to experiment and take risks.

“With a lot of the teachers we didn’t know each other, but by the end there was a camaraderie and the fact that we were working... just exchanging ideas about the projects... we now feel we know so-and-so at that school... we’re on first name terms now... so in future I’ll know if I need anything, I’ll know who to phone.”

The steering groups were also important because they helped the teachers and artists come to know and communicate well with each other. They enabled them to resolve problems and difficulties before they became intractable. Schools felt they had forged strong partnerships with the artists – even in schools where personnel changed, the relationship continued. The creative partners often kept in regular contact. One of the Birmingham Royal Ballet dancers, for example, developed a longstanding relationship with a Special school, which resulted in the formation of a professional dance company for special needs adults. Although relationships with artists had existed for some schools before their involvement with the Creative Partnerships project, they were generally ‘one-offs’, related to the personal interest or contacts of a particular teacher and not very close.

### How else did the schools benefit from the projects?

The study reported on a number of other positive outcomes for schools from working with creative partners, including:

- growth in children’s confidence
- improvements in the quality of the children’s work
- a sense of empowerment, freedom to innovate and increased job satisfaction among teachers
- development of out of school activities with students and parents seeing a reason for doing arts subjects
- development of teachers’, artists’, parents’ and young people’s ability to work collaboratively in teams
- creative teaching and learning strategies being used across an increased range of subject areas and in all age phases
- staff gaining accreditation in creative teaching through enrolling on postgraduate courses
- staff using their Creative Partnerships experience in leadership and management training.

“DJ’s were seen as being very different from teachers. Some of this rested on their high status as professionals within a music industry that the students were either familiar with or had aspirations to work within. It was clear that the DJs’ choice to work with the students (when they could be out cutting tracks) created a big impression on the students and raised their self-esteem.”



# Facilitating deep learning in creative education: the Club Dance Remix project in Creative Partnerships Birmingham

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Stephanie Vidal Hall, freelance researcher, 2004

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This study focused on the skills and processes two DJ's used to engage year 10 and year 11 GCSE music students during a series of workshops. During the workshops the students worked with artists to create their own club dance remix tracks. The workshops were observed, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the artists, the participating students, the key teacher and the headteacher.

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The project found that the students were highly motivated by the workshops. They showed an improved ability to concentrate, greater enthusiasm for learning, and improved behaviour and attendance. Improved attitudes were also noted outside of the workshops, indicating that the learning permeated beyond the immediate activities. Whilst working with a respected figure from the real world was highly valued by the students, the key to their motivation and engagement with creative learning appeared to be the DJs' non-evaluative and experiential teaching approaches. The headteacher reflected:

"I think the distinction between schools that are thriving, learning communities, and those that are places where kids turn up to get their GCSE's are that sense of commitment to being in something together. And that's where the creativity comes as well because you often only get that kind of energy and power if people are creating things together."

## How did the workshops help to engage the students with learning?

To begin with, musicians demonstrated their musical skills in a whole school assembly and invited students and staff to join in. The DJ's used sampled sounds from these contributions to create a short piece and played the piece to the whole school at the end of the assembly. In subsequent sessions, the students were introduced to the theory behind the remix process. During one of the sessions, artists shared stories about moments in their work when they had felt a particular sense of achievement or enjoyment. The students also took part in five practical workshops. These gave them the opportunity to work with artists in small groups on different aspects of music, such as beat boxing, mixing, rapping, sound technology and instrumental work.

The students were excited by the doing aspect of the workshops and revealed a marked preference for experiential learning, both within the Club Dance Remix workshops and within the curriculum generally. Several students commented how they would like to redress the balance between writing and doing. One student suggested that challenging behaviour was caused by an overabundance of written work. Another found the experiential nature of the workshops so novel; he referred to it as 'a new type of learning'. It was noticeable that the students showed greater engagement with the workshops that were interactive and experiential, particularly when they involved activities they regarded as being relevant to their real lives. The students' interest in music was aroused to the extent that they started organising further musical activity with their friends outside the classroom.

## How did the DJ's non-evaluative approach motivate the students?

The DJ's preferred teaching approach stemmed from a deeply held belief that they were not 'bringing art to the kids' but helping to draw existing 'poetry, music and art' from them. They did not see it as their role to give 'right answers', but to facilitate and develop the students' ideas. They made clear their view that assessing music was subjective; that the only meaningful assessment was the enjoyment that came from making music, developing their skills and listening to the result.

During the workshops, the DJ's encouraged student participation by asking them to make the 'most rubbish' sound they could on the keyboard. They then sampled and changed the sounds into successful components of a track. One student reported how this approach freed her from the limiting effects of negative criteria because she felt that even a 'wrong' sound could be 'right'. It helped her to feel more relaxed and creative, and motivated her to persevere with the challenge of creating a track even though her first attempt was 'rubbish'. She reflected:

"I think it's the first time (students) felt free of 'what if this or what if that, what if something goes wrong?' If something goes wrong you can just fix it... I can express myself more musically than I did before the workshop because I feel more optimistic towards my music. I don't worry as much as I did."

This student felt so motivated and empowered from being given the freedom to experiment and come up with her own answers, that she transferred her learning to other areas of her life. Before the workshops her attendance record had been around 40%. She commented how difficulties with curriculum work and its mode of delivery, as well as social relationships in school with her peers, kept her away from school. But by using them as the basis for a song, she turned her difficulties into something positive. The student found she enjoyed the Club Dance Remix workshops and attended every one. Her attendance generally also rose during this period to 75%. She commented:

"I just decided that I am not going to get anything done by staying at home. I looked at the DJ's and realised that they didn't get where they are by sitting at home, I have to try and get out there and make something of my life like they have and that's why they are there."



## What effect did working with the DJ's have on the students' attitude and behaviour?

Students and teachers alike reported how student behaviour had been good during the workshops. One reason for the improved behaviour was that the students felt club music was part of their own culture. But it was also clear that the students wanted to create a good impression with the DJ's and artists. Many of the students aspired to work in the music business and were deeply flattered that artists and DJ's from the 'real world' had chosen to spend time with them.

The improved attitudes and behaviour extended beyond the workshops. Students commented on forming new or deeper friendships based on discovering shared interests. They started to make music together at lunchtime, and during class music lessons they showed an increased ability to talk with one another about music. The key teacher reported how her relationship with one particularly difficult student had improved. The turning point had been a discussion of a track used during a workshop. But the DJs' approach and the choice of Club Dance Remix as a genre had also contributed to the improved relationship.

The headteacher reported how participating in the workshops and end of term performance-sharing event particularly transformed one student who was dealing with multiple difficulties in and out of school:

"From the howling banshee that was often on the floor screaming and chucking things around, to a child now who can take his place in society and feel valued... Because for a lot of these youngsters school isn't important for them, and so you try and help them to do well in school, they don't see that as a big deal. In fact, you know you've given them more aggravation. But things like that, that transform their chances and make them feel good and make them feel involved in the school and part of it, you save their lives, literally save their lives."

“The potential benefit of this project appeared to lie in the fact that its subject matter emanated from the young people themselves. The proposed skate park was something they genuinely desired and something that directly reflected their extra curricular interests.”



# Basing creative learning on young people's out-of-school interests: Working together to plan and design a skate park in Creative Partnerships Durham and Sunderland

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Steven Miles, University of Liverpool, 2004

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This project focused on the experiences of ten year 11 students who met over six months to discuss, plan and design a skate park for their school. The group worked with an architect and the school's head of technology. Like many of their fellow students, the group was concerned that the local community lacked facilities for skaters. The students commented for example:

"Skateboarders are discriminated against 'cos they see skating as causing damage and a ramp as a nuisance. And when we do skate we get moved. If we had a skate park we wouldn't have to move."

"It's not just about having a skate park it's about having places to go."

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The headteacher was keen that the school should be a focal point for the local community and welcomed the possibility of having a skate park in the school grounds. The students worked with the architect to develop a proposal for a skate park design which they could present to the headteacher for consideration.

The students were observed and interviewed (both in groups and individually), throughout the project to find out their experiences of creative learning. The architect and the head of technology at the school were also interviewed at the end of the project to gain their perspectives.

The project concluded that creative learning was promoted through an environment which encouraged the students to take creative risks rather than seek 'right' answers. In the process of learning to think creatively about their skate park design, the students also learned about the value of using a problem-solving approach, how to work together as a team, and how to listen to each other.

## What helped the students learn to think creatively?

The students found thinking creatively about their skate park design hard to do at first. To begin with, their thinking was constrained by an uncertainty over what they were doing and why, as well as by practical and financial concerns. For example, they talked of the need for insurance and the high cost of having the ramps made.

Having to think about the shape of the building that would house the proposed skate park was one of the group's biggest challenges. The group was shocked by the architect's suggestion that the outside of the building could be more than a simple, predictable, box-like structure. To the students, skate parks were always box-like and they couldn't see why their skate park should be any different. As time went by a split started to emerge between the skaters who wanted a square building because they felt it was the best shape for skating and the spectators who were beginning to think it would be good to buck the trend.

Two key events helped the group as a whole to start to think more creatively about the shape of the proposed skate park building:

- one student's discovery on the internet of an image of a doctor's surgery that showed the potential for a building that was functional, yet also looked good
- a video clip found by the architect on the internet of a skater doing a 360 degree loop which challenged something the group had, up until that point, understood to be 'the lore'.

The students started to see that the architect was trying to help them to think creatively, not tell them what to do. They realised they were not looking for the 'right answer':

"We came up with an idea and we weren't left with our idea. It was always added to and we kept building onto it. And we didn't just look at one way of sorting the problem, but lots of different ways."

### How did the students come to learn to work together as a team?

The architect was keen that the students worked together as a team and from the start encouraged them to work together through using phrases such as, “We need to...” At first the students tended to work on the tasks individually, rather than as a group and expected the architect to guide them. They seemed reluctant to think beyond a conventional teacher-pupil relationship. They were also constrained by wanting to fit in with their peers. For example, when the architect asked the students to express their view by either giving a ‘thumbs up’ or a thumbs down’ gesture, they frantically looked at each other before responding.

By the end of the project, the students were referring to the skate park as ‘our skate park’. One student in particular worked hard to include the others, by asking, for example, “What do we think of that...” The students liked having the opportunity of working together as a team. Bouncing ideas off each other helped them to think creatively. They commented, for example:

“We’re learning to take other people’s points of view and work with them.”

“In the rest of the school we don’t really work as a team as such.”

What else did the students learn from taking part in the project?

The students felt that the project had helped them to learn how to listen to each other. One student commented:

“It’s been a lot less formal where we just sit. You can get your ideas out straight about what you want [to say]. It’s like you concentrate on one thing more ‘cos there’s less people so everyone listens to what you say and then have their say.”

The students’ also learned that there were benefits to problem-solving:

“This is a practical way of learning. Instead of being in a classroom and just being taught... It’s actually getting involved and doing it yourself.”

“You would just think there are standard ways of doing it, but when we went in and said like these are problems, these aren’t problems, go away and fix them and do what you want with them it kinda makes you think more. It does make you a lot more creative.”

“We’re learning about how buildings come about, how cities are laid out and stuff.”

Making the final presentation helped the students learn how to get the group’s main points across. It reflected some strategic thought on their part. The presentation was well organised – it told the story of the project, with recommendations from the group about the design and the location of the skate park.

“Nearly all artists working independently in schools  
require a degree of supporting structure”.





# Creative apprentices: Training artists for working in participatory settings in Creative Partnerships Black Country

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Felicity Woolf, Felicity Woolf Associates, 2004

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This study looked at the support that was available in the West Midlands to artists wanting to work with people in learning, health, social inclusion and regeneration settings. Researchers gathered data from a questionnaire completed by 196 artists, meetings with around 120 people, and individual and group interviews.

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The researchers found that training opportunities for artists wanting to be involved in participatory art were limited. The type of training most artists said they would like was apprenticeship style that involved training on the job, working alongside a more experienced artist and networking with other artists.

The study detailed two different kinds of successful training:

- programmes in which trainee artists shadowed lead artists and ran their own school projects in primary, secondary and special schools, such as 'Take your partners' and 'Creative Apprentices'
- specialist training, such as 'Sea child' a programme which involved artists working in a theatre-in-education group with young children at risk of exclusion.

The trainees valued the experience they gained from both kinds of programme. They also suggested ways the training could be improved.

## **What training was available and what kind of training did artists prefer?**

The study found that there were few training opportunities available in the area for new entrant artists wanting to work in participatory arts, despite the high number of students graduating in practical arts subjects. Arts students were also rarely made aware of the opportunities to work in participatory arts that were available. Opportunities for experienced artists working in participatory arts were rare too. Although many of the arts organisations in the region trained their own staff through on-the-job training, such training was not usually made available to artists outside of the organisations.

The training opportunities artists valued most were those that offered practical on-the-job learning with some theoretical input and a chance to network with other learners. Many liked training which involved shadowing a more experienced artist on a placement. They also liked having a mentor available.

Recently qualified artists particularly valued accreditation. Having a qualification which showed they were competent to lead participatory arts activities gave them confidence when seeking work. The artists were aware that different learning settings had their own behaviour codes and boundaries which they wanted to understand before starting on projects. For example, with some projects, artists felt they needed to understand what was appropriate for groups from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. For social inclusion projects, artists felt they needed to have skills in motivating people and behaviour management.

### **Example 1: Artists' apprenticeships – shadowing lead artists in arts projects**

The 'Take your partners' programme gave apprentice artists the opportunity to observe and take part in artist-led projects in primary, secondary and special schools. The 5-day projects included 'Diwali' (at key stages 1 and 2) which combined music and Indian story-telling, dance, and 'shadows' (at key stages 3 and 4) which combined dance, theatre, video digital images and shadow puppets. The 'Creative apprentices' programme also gave trainees the opportunity to plan and lead a project.

The trainees on the programme were mostly positive about their training. They mentioned around 15 learning outcomes including:

- improved communication techniques
- understanding of the differences in the role of the artist and the teacher
- ways of managing children
- the importance of planning, integration and flexibility
- the power of participatory work.

The presentations at the end of project celebration showed that most of the apprentice artists enjoyed leading their own project and many achieved good results from their pupils. By the end of the programmes the trainees felt more confident, able to approach a school and more aware of what made an effective project. The features the trainees liked best about the programme included having time to reflect, the input from the other creative practitioners and interacting with other trainees. The relationship that developed between the lead artist and the apprentice was key to the success of the programme.

The weaknesses in the programmes were mostly to do with organisation. Some trainees had a fairly limited experience of only one school and one lead artist, whilst others saw up to three schools and watched several different artists. Teachers felt they would have liked to have been more involved, especially in the development of the trainees' projects. They also felt they could have played a useful role in explaining how schools operate, child protection, the curriculum and classroom management.

## **Example 2: Specialist training – a theatre-in-education programme**

‘Sea child’ was a touring theatre-in-education programme which aimed to raise awareness of how a particular part of the education system worked and how theatre-in-education operated. ‘Sea child’ worked with groups of infant children at risk of exclusion from mainstream school who were already being taught in withdrawn groups. The children were in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and in nurture groups.

‘Sea child’ told the story of a young child, Annie, who felt alienated at home and from everything around her. In the story, Annie is taken back in time to the fishing community which once existed in her community to witness the struggle of generations in a changing world. The teaching emphasis of the programme was on using story, imagination and drama as an extension of play. Trainee artists participated in five sessions. They also observed and worked with a particular at-risk child.

The trainee artists felt that the training had given them more confidence about working with young children with educational and behavioural difficulties and that they would be able to use what they had learned in other educational settings. All the trainees felt that the training had been short and limited in scope and that they would need more support to work independently in other PRU settings. They wanted to see other PRU settings and gain more experience of working with children at risk of exclusion. They felt having more information about PRUs (such as why and how they operate) would have helped too.



# Creative Partnerships' approach to research and evaluation 2006-08

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David Parker, Research Director, Creative Partnerships

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## Our process

Creative Partnerships national offices co-ordinates 4 types of research and evaluation work:

1. Nationally commissioned research/evaluation projects. These focus on comparing and contrasting:

- Impact by theme
- the effectiveness of delivery modes across regions.

This approach also allows Creative Partnerships directly to address emerging policy challenges

2. Responses to the ongoing Creative Partnerships national research call.

This process allows us to commission the best and most imaginative researchers in the field exploring innovative and original research questions

3. Quarterly monitoring. This process is constantly updated to capture rich and meaningful data describing programme delivery and local partnership arrangements

4. Local completion of a nationally agreed self-evaluation process. This focuses on determining the quality and impact of programme delivery at school-based/programme level.

The aim is to weave together the variety of data-sets and analyses arising from this multi-strand approach to provide consistent, robust narratives of change and impact. Summary reports of findings, exemplified by this publication, will appear on a yearly basis.

## Work in progress

There are currently two pieces of nationally commissioned evaluation and five research projects currently being undertaken.

1. John Harland (NFER) is producing a typology of Creative Partnerships activities to enable us to describe more securely the type and range of our work.
2. Dick Downing (NFER) is exploring the cascade or ripple effect as Creative Partnerships expands from level 1 schools onto other neighbouring practices.
3. Professors Pat Thompson (Nottingham University) and Ken Jones (Keele University) are exploring the effect of Creative Partnerships on whole school, institutional change.
4. Professor Maurice Galton (University of Cambridge) is exploring the effect of Creative Partnerships activities on the attitudes and behaviours of school students.
5. The Centre for Language in Primary Education is analysing the impact of Creative Partnerships activities on parental participation and involvement.
6. The BfI/NFER is exploring the impact of creative learning on moving – image education.
7. Dr. Richard Hatcher (University of Central England) is exploring the impact of the creative curriculum on school development.

In addition to these research and evaluation reports, Creative Partnerships will be publishing a literature review series later in the year, to support and build capacity and knowledge in this field.

## Work in the Commissioning Pipeline

At this point in time Creative Partnerships is putting out to tender an audit/review of the self-evaluation process, analysing how the model is fit for purpose and can be developed to produce more consistent and comparative data. This will produce robust aggregation of the practices currently being carried out by Creative Partnerships across regions.

For further details on any of the work outlined above please contact:

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## Photography Credits

- Pg 3 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Playground of the Imagination.  
Photographer: Amanda Crowther.
- Pg 4 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Take One Picture.  
Photographer: Tim Smith.
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- Pg 12 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR):  
A project inspired by communication. Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 16 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR):  
A project inspired by communication. Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 20 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR):  
Exploring how creativity and innovation can improve both personal  
and school performance. Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 25 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Playground of the Imagination.  
Photographer: Amanda Crowther.
- Pg 26 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR):  
A drama practitioner worked with every teacher in the school to  
deliver a range of lessons. Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 30 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR).  
The whole school worked with artists and explored the poem  
'Jabberwocky'. Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 34 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Playground of the Imagination.  
Photographer: Amanda Crowther.
- Pg 38 Creative Partnerships Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham (BDR):  
Develop and undertake a cross-curricular themed approach.  
Photographer: Gavin Joynt.
- Pg 42 Creative Partnerships Bradford: This photograph is taken from the  
school staff creative INSET, designed to inspire them on the start  
of their Creative Partnerships journey. Photographer: Joan Russell.
- Pg 46 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Playground of the Imagination.  
Photographer: Amanda Crowther.
- Pg 50 Creative Partnerships Bradford: Playground of the Imagination.  
Photographer: Amanda Crowther.

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