INSPIRING LEARNING IN GALLERIES
RESEARCH REPORTS

tenquire about
learning in galleries
This publication reports on enquire, which is one strand of the Strategic Commissioning Programme for Museum and Gallery Education, funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The programme has been managed by engage, in association with Arts Council England.

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Due to research confidentiality the photographs from enquire projects with children and young people are not credited in this publication. They are included in order to indicate the range of work undertaken with exhibitions and artists and not to illustrate specific points made in the text.

A word version of this text is posted on www.en-quire.org to print in large type.
enquire about learning in galleries
118 Report on research undertaken by ISIS Arts in collaboration with the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle, and partner artists and teachers.

140 Report on research undertaken by FACT, folly and Cornerhouse in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Liverpool John Moores University and the commissioned artist.

164 Report on research undertaken by The Manchester Museum, Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium and Artists and Education in collaboration with The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University, and partner artists and teachers.

218 Report on research undertaken by Fabrica, the Towner Museum and Art Gallery and the De La Warr Pavilion in collaboration with the Centre for Continuing Education at the Sussex Institute, University of Sussex, and partner artists and teachers.

242 Report on research undertaken by SPACE, Phoenix Arts Centre, the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW), Plymouth Arts Centre and the Lighthouse Visual Arts Centre in collaboration with the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter, and partner artists and teachers.

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INTRODUCTION
Introduction

This publication comprises full research reports from phase 2, 2006-8, of the enquire programme. It accompanies Inspiring Learning in Galleries 02 which provides a description of the programme and a policy context, a summary of common findings across the research projects and a scientific report which analyses the research questions, methodologies and findings.

engage is delighted to be publishing further evidence of the learning benefits to children and young people of gallery education and common findings from across eleven enquire research projects. This comes at a moment of considerable development within arts education with the launch of the Find Your Talent programme, the new secondary curriculum, the Diploma in Creative and Media, and Creative Apprenticeships, and other changes on the horizon such as the revised primary curriculum. What these initiatives have in common is a real need to develop sustainable partnerships – particularly at a local and regional level – between schools, colleges and youth organisations, and cultural organisations and artists. At the same time there is a focus on self-directed learning, work related learning and on cross-curricular working. Delivery of all these initiatives and policies can be enhanced by schools and colleges working in partnership with visual arts organisations and artists.

New opportunities such as the Diploma in Creative and Media and Creative Apprenticeships have the potential for young people to see the visual arts as an area of education, training and employment and in turn for the workforce in galleries to become more diverse. Equally, initiatives supporting teacher trainees to undertake part of their training in another setting such as a gallery offer valuable opportunities for teachers to gain experience of the cultural sector and to understand how the sector can support teaching and learning.

The enquire programme was initiated by engage with the Arts Council of England four years ago. It grew from the understanding that education and learning in galleries has a key role to play in young people’s learning but that there was a paucity of robust research about the learning benefits to young people of engaging with contemporary art and artists. Gallery education in the UK has developed since the 1970’s and has a deservedly high profile internationally. However, as a discipline gallery education is under theorised and this is made more problematic by the wide range of theoretical frameworks which gallery education draws on.

The enquire research is impressive for the consistency of the research findings. This is despite both the range of practices included in the research clusters and the different methodologies and theoretical frameworks employed by the researchers. It is also clear that the benefits to young people of working with artists and contemporary art in the visual arts sector appear to be consistent with the reported benefits to young people of working with cultural organisations and artists in other disciplines and media.

It is now crucial that the cultural sector has the capacity to partner effectively with schools to offer young people access to high quality art. However, research that informed Turning Point, the Arts Council of England’s visual arts policy, found that regularly funded organisations only spent 4% of their budgets on education and learning. Since gallery directors are well aware of the value of education and learning this suggests that many galleries have insufficient recourses to deliver their programmes and this is a huge challenge.

engage would like to thank the Arts Council of England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council who have been partners on the Strategic Commissioning for Museum and Gallery Education programme. engage is also grateful to the Foyle Foundation for enabling three further enquire projects in new areas of the country in 2008-9. Lastly, thanks must go to the teachers, artists, researchers and gallery educators who have carried out the programme, and the children and young people who have taken part and contributed their views.

Jane Sillis
Director, engage

Barbara Taylor
enquire Programme Director
02 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
enquire is a ground-breaking research programme, and the largest systematic review in England to focus on how children and young people can learn through galleries, contemporary art and artists.

The programme has been based on ‘clusters’ – partnerships involving schools/youth groups, galleries, artists and a higher education partner to bring structure and rigour to the research.

Phase 1 ran from 2004-06, involving three clusters, and was reported in *Inspiring Learning for All* (2006). During phase 2, from 2006-08, the programme grew to seven clusters, and in October 2008 a further three clusters joined with support from the Foyle Foundation.

### Key research findings

- Working on projects in galleries complements similar activity in school, they are interesting, less solitary and more fun. The participants found the projects more stimulating and involving than other learning experiences, and as a result put in more effort and commitment.

- Art projects are a great introduction to galleries and museums. Many of the participants had not visited before, but barriers were broken down and they were keen to return, opening the door to a lifelong relationship with art.

- The projects introduced contemporary art, its practice and its values to the children and young people involved. They have gained confidence in talking about art, explored the process of making art, and their attitudes to contemporary art have been transformed.

- Many young people learned art skills, particularly in digital media, providing them with more career options.

- Through the projects, the participants developed essential skills for life, including working and taking decisions on their own, social, communication, debate and discussion, and the ability to develop relationships.

- Working with artists is different from working with teachers. The artists encouraged participants to ask questions and discuss issues, and focused on experimentation and process over product. Instead of telling young people what to do, artists have presented different possibilities and ways of thinking.

- Artists and participants learned together, with artists seen as facilitators – very different from many relationships between young people and adults. The young people were trusted and responded positively by honing their talents.

- Many projects recruited from art departments and some have involved partnerships between artists and learners. The projects have provided excellent opportunities for reflection and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for both artists and teachers.
Scale and scope

enquire is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and to date has encompassed 182 projects, with 124 schools, 39 galleries and 178 artists – benefiting more than 7,360 young people.

The sheer scale of the programme has been remarkable, and its momentum has brought about a step change in the practice of artists working with young people, teachers working with artists, and the gallery education profession. Participants have used the experience gained through enquire to develop their methods, and through their networks across the sector have influenced gallery programming, the attitude of schools to partnerships with galleries, and delivery of the art curriculum.

The body of knowledge it has created, the partnerships established, and the networks developed add up to a major contribution to gallery education and cultural infrastructure. The learning from enquire will be disseminated as a resource for galleries, artists and schools, and many of the clusters are already establishing regional networks to drive improvement within the sector.

Above all, the young people engaged are a living legacy – their stories a testament to the power of contemporary visual art to unlock potential and transform lives. Young people at risk of exclusion have found confidence and voice with groups of young people using contemporary art as a catalyst for dialogue between different cultures. And many have gained the skills needed to take their first steps towards a career in the cultural and creative sector.

The research approach

As a research programme, enquire began with a challenging brief: to understand the processes by which galleries and contemporary visual artists can support learning – about art, across the wider school curriculum, and the acquisition of skills for life.

Each cluster identified its own research questions – dependent on its interests and local circumstances – and developed the projects to explore these, recording the outcomes and learning in a standard format to enable the information to be compared and over-arching themes to be identified.

The research reports published here are summarised in Inspiring Learning in Galleries 02, along with recommendations to bring about system change.

Context

The enquire programme has coincided with a period of great progress and optimism in the arts and cultural sector, stimulated initially by the ground-breaking settlement for the arts in the 2002 Comprehensive Spending Review. The backdrop has been unprecedented investment in arts organisations through Arts Council England and other funding bodies, such as the Museums, Libraries and Archive Council’s (MLA) Renaissance in the Regions.

The sector has grown in confidence, for example in asserting the contribution that culture makes to many areas of public life, ranging from regenerating local areas and communities, to supporting the economy through tourism.

There have been initiatives aimed at developing infrastructure, such as Strategic Commissioning and the Renaissance programme, alongside policies and initiatives aimed at just one art form, such as Arts Council England’s Turning Point, which sets out a ten-year strategy for contemporary visual arts.

More significantly, the arts have developed a strong narrative to argue for their importance in their own right – not just in bringing the so-called “instrumental” benefits of achieving other goals through the arts. The contribution of the arts to public life has been powerfully articulated in What People Want From The Arts (March 2008), the report of Arts Council England’s public value inquiry.
Cumbria, Lancashire
- folly
Manchester
- Cornerhouse
Liverpool
- FACT

Preston
- Harris Art Gallery and Museum
Manchester
- The Manchester Museum
Bolton
- Bolton Art Gallery and Museum

Exeter
- Spacex
- Phoenix Arts Centre
Haldon Forest
- Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World
Brixham
- Lighthouse Gallery
Plymouth
- Plymouth Arts Centre

Newcastle and Gateshead
- ISIS Arts
- BALTIC
- Laing Art Gallery
- Hatton Gallery
- Amino Arts

Berwick upon Tweed
- Gymnasium Gallery
- Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival

King’s Lynn
- King’s Lynn Arts Centre
Ely
- Babylon Gallery
Norwich
- Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts
- Outpost/ Fruitful Arts
- NR5

Whitechapel Gallery
- Bow Arts Trust
- Chisenhale Gallery
- SPACE Studios

Bexhill
- De La Warr Pavilion
Eastbourne
- Towner Art Gallery
Brighton
- Fabrika
Portsmouth
- Aspex
Newport Harbour
- Quay Arts

Galleries reporting in this publication on projects and research 2004-8
Eight additional galleries started projects Autumn 2007
Arguably the largest and most important area of growth during this period has been the contribution of culture to learning, so *enquire* brings gallery education to the fore at a critical time.

The current policy drivers include Every Child Matters, the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto, and the McMaster Report, and there have been a host of initiatives across the arts and education sectors that affect young people including:

- the Cultural Hubs
- Creative Partnerships, and the creation of the Youth Culture Trust
- the review of the secondary curriculum and the introduction the Diploma in Creative and Media
- the Creativity Review
- Arts Award

Entitlement
Since the late 1970’s there has been an acknowledgement across all the major political parties of the importance of the arts, our cultural heritage, and their role in education. Moreover, there has been a political will to extend access to culture both in terms of numbers and the range of people benefiting from and enjoying opportunities. This aspiration has been shared by the cultural sector amidst debate about whose culture is preserved and promoted, and for whom. For at least ten years the arts and heritage sectors have argued for some form of ‘cultural entitlement’ for young people, to put the arts and culture within reach of all.

On 13 February 2008, the DCMS and the DCSF announced *Find Your Talent*, a scheme for children and young people, with ten Pathfinder programmes over three years, to test a variety of local approaches.

It is intended that this will develop into a universal ‘Cultural Offer’, which will ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to engage in high quality cultural activity for at least five hours a week, either within or outside school and the school day.

What has been learned through the *enquire* programme will be invaluable in informing the development of the Cultural Offer, and supporting galleries in their preparations to support delivery.

In particular, the *enquire* projects have:

- promoted visual literacy – helping young people to develop the tools and vocabulary to experience and respond to art
- unlocked creativity – stimulating young people to explore their own creative potential, to make art themselves, and to pursue careers in the creative industries
- promoted cultural empowerment – building young people’s confidence with, and understanding of artists, galleries, arts centres, art museums
- developed key life skills such as self-esteem, team working and decision making.

Engaging young people at risk of exclusion
*enquire* projects have been particularly interested in how to engage young people, and in finding out ‘what works’ in gallery education. Several of the projects have involved young people at risk of exclusion, with difficult or disadvantaged backgrounds, or with behavioural difficulties.

Engagement with artists and contemporary art through this programme has transformed attitudes and behaviours and has proved to be a catalyst for further interest and activity for many of these young people.

At a time when there is increasing concern about young people and anti-social behaviour, *enquire* has discovered that contemporary visual art may be able to offer something unique.
Structures
The programme has also had much to say about the models for learning and the structures required to promote them. The approach of ‘clustering’ galleries with schools, artists and universities has enabled deep exploration of:

- the roles of artist and teacher, and how each profession can add value to the other
- how long-term relationships can be established, between galleries, artists and schools
- how self-directed learning can be stimulated, encouraged and sustained.

Above all, enquire provides powerful evidence about the impact of learning in galleries and with artists, and what we need to do to make more use of these community resources.

Conclusion
The enquire research provides valuable evidence of precisely what children and young people learn through engaging with galleries, contemporary art and artists and the conditions that enable that learning. It also demonstrates how galleries and artists and sustained partnerships with schools and teachers can support the teaching of art and design and the aims of Every Child Matters, along with other education and cultural policies. The sector has shown how galleries – from large national to small local organisations – can be to meet current challenges and make a significant difference to teaching and to the skills and aspirations of young people.
EAST CLUSTER RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts, King's Lynn Art Centre, Babylon Gallery, NR5, Outpost and Fruitful Arts in collaboration with the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia; and partner artists and teachers.

Final report by Jacqueline Watson, University of East Anglia (UEA) in collaboration with Sarah Horence, Katie Edwardson (researchers) Barbara Walker (research advisor); Veronica Sekules, Charlotte Peel, Eileen Goonan (Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts), Liz Falconbridge, Nick Neal (King's Lynn Art Centre), Joanne Clemence, Emily Ward (Babylon Gallery); Emma Cameron (NR5), Mandy Roberts, Tricia Hall (Outpost).
Introduction

Key ideas

- learning for empowerment
- young people engaging with art as producers, viewers and advocates
- personal, social and citizenship development of young people
- listening to young people's voices/youth audience

enquire East cluster partners
The enquire project was carried out in two phases. In phase 2.2 the enquire project overlapped with an envision project to develop more youth friendly galleries (see www.en-vision.org.uk) and two new partners were brought into the cluster community.

Phase 2.1, 2006-7
Babylon Gallery & Arts Development East Cambridgeshire
King's Lynn Art Centre (KLAC)
Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts (SCVA)

Phase 2.2, 2007-8
Babylon Gallery & Arts Development East Cambridgeshire
King's Lynn Art Centre (KLAC)
NR5 Community Arts Organisation
Fruitful Arts & OUTPOST Gallery
Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts (SCVA)

enquire East researchers

Phase 2.1
Dr Barbara Walker from the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia (UEA), was advisory researcher to the project. The research was carried out by artist–researcher, Sarah Florence, with assistance from Katie Edwardson, both based at SCVA.

Phase 2.2
The research was carried out by Dr Jacqueline Watson, Visiting Fellow from the Centre for Applied Research in Education, UEA, based at SCVA.

Both phases entailed additional action research, and members of the project teams were involved in the collection and analysis of evidence alongside the researchers.

In phase 2.2 the enquire project overlapped with an envision project and there was a (part-time) administrator for the projects: Eileen Goonan, based at SCVA.

This report was written by Dr Jacqueline Watson with the enquire East cluster partners.

Research aims and objectives

The participating galleries and art educators worked in independent research contexts related to their previous work and experience with young people. The cluster partners had very different backgrounds and goals but, collectively, they set out to explore how and which collaborative and dialogical practices could best empower young people, help them to gain ownership of the gallery space, and increase their engagement with art – as producers, viewers and advocates.

The project focused on two broad aims:

- for young people to interrogate their own learning and personal development in and around the art gallery and investigate the role of art in their lives
- for the galleries to investigate how to empower young people in order to increase their engagement with art, as producers, viewers and advocates, and for galleries better to understand how to enable young people to gain ownership of the gallery space and to bring young people’s interests and talents into the heart of programming

The research project also followed the progress of four other objectives:

- each partner to work with young people, exploring by what means and to what extent they may gain ownership of the gallery space
- each partner to engage young people in a programme of activity – to involve responding to and working with exhibitions, and working with artists and gallery education staff
- each partner to provide appropriate training in skills for the young people, the passing on of skills to be a key part of the project activity
• each partner to discover how best to empower young people and their work in relation to the gallery and the cultural sector, and to establish how this may be critical to their development as creative and responsible citizens.

Research questions

• What are the conditions for enabling learning for empowerment in the gallery context?
• How can galleries and young people learn from each other in order to bring young people's voices, interests and talents into the heart of programming?

Theoretical framework

The *enquire* East research was driven by an interest in the potential of art galleries to contribute to young people's learning for empowerment. The East cluster set out to work with young people to explore how best to empower them and their work in relation to the gallery and how they might gain ownership of the gallery space.

This is a subject of considerable interest at the moment, especially as government is keen for children and young people to have greater autonomy in their education, to participate more fully in society, and to have a greater say in the institutions that provide services for them. This has led, for instance, to the government policies, *Every Child Matters* (DfES 2005) and *Youth Matters* (DfES 2005), as well as the recent DfES review *Diversity and Citizenship* (DfES 2007).

As the research developed, however, it became increasingly clear that the word 'empowerment' could be understood in different ways. This was particularly so given the significant differences between the groups of young people involved. The five East cluster projects formed two distinct sets, and the differences between these sets of young people were sometimes marked. It was shocking to think that they were of a similar age, living in a similar geographical area, but were experiencing such differences in social conditions, intellectual and creative ability, and ability to express their views. Comparison brought into sharp contrast the differences between the young people and the art education they could be offered; it complicated what might be meant by learning for empowerment. This report recognises, then, that empowerment can be understood on different levels.

On one level, there is a concern to better empower children and young people by encouraging educators to give greater attention to children and young people's personal, social and citizenship development, inclusion and autonomy. This has led to a wealth of government policies; the introduction of citizenship education and active citizenship; moves toward personalised learning, as well as self-directed learning; changes to education approaches to better include disaffected young people; an increased concern for children and young people's social and personal development, and for their general wellbeing.

Government also wants education to extend beyond the classroom, however, to a broader range of institutions, and for children and young people to have a voice in determining the services provided for them by those institutions. Listening to the voices of children and young people, as users, was given a much higher profile with the introduction of the *Every Child Matters* and *Youth Matters* programmes, which picked up on an increased interest in users' perspectives in the design and delivery of private and public services. *Every Child Matters* calls for the increased participation of children and young people in their services so that, 'Children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively' (DfES 2005a); and *Youth Matters* states, for instance:

> Local involvement is about more than just consulting – important though that is. We must give teenagers and their parents a real voice in decision-making and, increasingly, put spending power in their hands.

(DfES 2005b: 22)

Roger Hart has argued most strongly for children's and young people's 'participation' in institutions (Hart 1997) and Jean Ruddock (2005) for greater 'pupil voice' in the context of schools. In this research, Hart's Ladder of Participation was used as a benchmark to assess the levels of participation of young people in each of the projects and galleries (see Table 1). However, Hart's view of participation must be treated with some caution. Other researchers working in the field have expressed
reservations, in particular pointing to the need to be honest with young people about the limitations of their power and for a need to consider, perhaps more realistically than Hart, what might be meant by participation in practice (Sinclair 2004). Participation levels across children’s services are currently low (Oldfield & Fowler 2004) and cultures of participation need to be built (Kirby et al. 2003).

From Roger Hart (1997) Children’s Participation: The Theory And Practice Of Involving Young Citizens In Community Development And Environmental Care, written for UNICEF

(See, for instance, the Freechild Website, http://www.freechild.org/ladder.htm, accessed 26 October 2007)

There is a growing interest, then, in increasing the autonomy of children and young people and giving them a stronger voice in the institutions that provide services for them. But the discussion about how best to do this in practice is also widening. So what of the art gallery and museum? Although Eileen Hooper-Greenhill does not refer explicitly to young people, she does argue in a recent article that art museums need to change in order better to focus on ‘issues of narrative and voice’ (2000: 18), including those of the ‘visitors and their worlds’ (p.17). Art museums must, she says, become involved in audience research to listen to the voice of the user and change the balance of power so that ‘The curatorial voice … [is not] the only one to be heard.’ (p.19)

Society is changing. The modernist structures that we inherited from the 19th century are under attack. Many of the challenges to traditional values challenge the core values of the museum, and the art museum in particular. … In the past, it has been the perspectives and desires of the curator that have been paramount; today, the perspectives and desires of audiences must be researched and acknowledged. (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 8)

This must be as true for an audience of young people as for other types of audience.

This project explored the different ways in which gallery education could contribute to young people’s empowerment and, within that, how it could better engage them in participation and evaluation and give them voice. By talking with young people, the project also explored their views of art; their views of art galleries in young people’s lives; and their views on how art galleries might increase young people’s participation in the arts and art galleries.
Methods

In phase 2.1 the project used an innovative and ambitious approach to research by employing an artist as artist-researcher, researching practice as part of the team or action learning set. The artist-researcher’s work was overseen by an advisory researcher from the Centre for Applied Research in Education, UEA. In phase 2.2 the research was carried out by a researcher linked to UEA with support from the gallery educators who were gathering evidence for a concurrent envision project.

In phase 2.1 the concentration on research practice was seen as an unique opportunity for an artist to reflect on her own teaching practice, witness other artists’ approaches to teaching, discover more about teenage life, interests and aspirations, and learn how to help young people to embed art and creative thinking in their lives. This was a holistic working experience which helped to broaden the outlook of all the participants and highlighted the value of having a mixed-experience team.

In phase 2.2 enquire East was the only cluster which was also involved in the envision programme and the enquire and envision projects partly overlapped. Because envision involves action research it was important that the stage 2.2 researcher did not interfere with the methodological integrity of envision, where the project groups had autonomy over their research.

Evidence was collected through observation, video and photographs throughout both phases, both by the researchers and by members of the project teams. One-to-one interviews were carried out by the artist-researcher in phase 2.1 and by the researcher in phase 2.2.

In phase 2.2 the researcher conducted in-depth conversational interviews with one or two of the adult participants in each project in order to consolidate the thinking and learning achieved by the different projects in phases 2.1 and 2.2 and to investigate further the research questions (see appendices 1 and 2). The interview, which took the form of a conversation, was based on these questions but also followed the emergent interests of the interviewee (Cottle 1977; Benney & Hughes 1984: 216). The researcher also carried out different forms of evaluation with some of the young people involved in the project. This involved taped interviews with two young people from each of the BFT, KLAC and SCVA projects. All the taped interviews were transcribed and passed to the interviewees for checking.

The young people in the two NR5 projects, working with the SCVA, Fruitful Arts and OUTPOST, evaluated their projects through a guided discussion with their NR5 tutor during an art lesson. The discussion was observed by the researcher, who also contributed a few questions. The Year 10 discussion focused on the collection of photographs in the Project Diary, and young people added evaluation comments to the Diary on post-it notes. Additionally, the researcher briefly interviewed two groups of two young people from the NR5 Year 10 group. None of these discussions or interviews was recorded; instead, the researcher wrote a bullet-point summary of her understanding of the views expressed, which was passed to the NR5 tutor, who then corroborated the researcher’s interpretation with the young people (appendix 3). The Year 11 discussion began with an overhead projector show of photographs of galleries and the NR5 Year 11 group additionally completed a one-page questionnaire provided by the researcher (appendix 4).

Photographs and video played a vital role throughout the research in all the projects, recording evidence for the young people and the art educators/action researchers. Talking about the photographs and video footage and reflecting on the experience of the projects was used as a natural and informal method for art educators to work with young people in evaluating the projects.

The research deliberately developed different evaluation processes for the young people in order to explore different approaches to engaging young people in evaluation, in particular the excluded and vulnerable young people. Because the enquire conclusions had to be drawn up before the end of the envision work, it was anticipated that the envision projects would further develop the processes for young people’s evaluation, and Fruitful Arts did, indeed, complete their envision evaluation with the young people as this report was being written. They successfully used the envision questionnaires by helping the young people to complete them in group work; they encouraged them to respond to evaluation questions by spray painting the questions on large boards and asking the young people to spray paint their response.
Research ethics
The young people were photographed and videoed with the agreement of parents and carers. The young people themselves were asked to agree to interviews being tape-recorded. Year 10 NR5 young people did not want interviews tape-recorded. All recorded interviews were transcribed and passed to the interviewees for checking and to enable them to remove any sections that they did not want quoted or used in the final report. An ethics statement was drawn up and sent to the adult interviewees, and young people were told verbally that they could withdraw from the research (appendix 5).

Process

East cluster partners and projects
The research involved a number of partners working on five distinct projects. Each of the projects explored and examined aspects of the research questions in a discreet piece of research. Monthly cluster meetings were held with the partners to discuss progress and problems and, in the later stages of the research, to plan a joint exhibition of the young people’s work.

The cluster partners and their projects are:

- Babylon Gallery, Ely, is a public, contemporary art gallery owned by the charity Arts Development East Cambridgeshire (ADEC). It is situated on the riverside and is within a few minutes’ walk of Ely Cathedral and the centre of the city. It does not have a permanent collection or an education space; it hosts eight exhibitions per year, ranging from local graduate artists to Hayward Gallery touring shows. Ofsite outreach work is regularly carried out with school students, members of community groups and the general public. Satellite exhibitions are held in restaurants, supermarkets and coffee bars. The focus of the gallery programme is to enable socially engaged work by artists.

Taking part in the project were:
Jo Cleman role, Gallery Coordinator (phases 2.1 and 2.2)
Emily Ward, artist, printmaker, artist educator (phase 2.1)

Babylon 15-20
In phase 2.1 the gallery established ‘Babylonfifteentwenty’ (BFT) as a peer-led group. This was a self-selected group of young people from fifteen to twenty years old. Snowballing on occasion to sixteen members, the consistent core group comprised eight young people.

Participants chose their desired medium, selected their own workshop artist from a shortlist of three artists, and chose Curwen Print Study Centre as their destination for learning new skills. The group also wanted to produce a publication containing all their works and their own text, although in the event this didn’t happen, because the young people were too busy with A levels and most then moved on to college.

In phase 2.2 the BFT group disbanded, but the gallery educator drew on the experience of this project, including the use of Arts Award, to form a new group made up of members of the Ely Young Carers Group. This was a younger group, aged eleven years and above. Participants chose to work on graffiti art, Hip Hop dance and filmmaking.

In both phases, Arts Award emerged as a strong feature of the project because of its emphasis on self-directed learning, and the project enabled gallery educators to become more familiar with this pedagogy. The project coincided with, and supported, three young people achieving Gold Arts Awards and four young people achieving Bronze Arts Awards, the Gold Awards being among the first five Gold Awards in the region.

I think when you do art you have strong opinions about what you want, and it was an experience taking on other people’s points of view. If you’re doing a group thing, then it’s a different ballgame to just doing your own artwork at GCSE or A level. You can do what you want at A level and get the outcome you want. With a group you have to compromise, but usually the outcome is better. But you’ve got to keep that in mind and respect other people’s opinions. BFT young person

- King’s Lynn Art Centre (KLAC) is a venue leased from the National Trust and managed by the local authority. It comprises four gallery spaces and a theatre/art house cinema. The Visual Arts and Education section offers a dynamic year-round programme of temporary exhibitions and events. The range of work covers film and video, sculpture, painting, drawing, photography, textiles, ceramics and crafts showcases. An interpretative education programme involves art, literacy
and drama workshops linked to exhibitions, activity days for schools and large-scale interactive drama projects within the town, often linked to social history, outreach work and partnerships, a regular Saturday Art Club, lectures and a dedicated delivery of the new Arts Award. For the past five years the venue has specialised in using the arts to build the confidence and self-esteem of young offenders and young people at risk.

Taking part in the project were:
Liz Falconbridge, Arts and Education manager (phases 2.1 and 2.2)
Nick Neal, Gallery Educator (phases 2.1 and 2.2)
Inge-Lise Greaves, lead artist (phase 2.1)
Jim Aitchison, support artist (phase 2.1)
Tim Edwards, artist/ animator (phase 2.2)

The KLAC project
KLAC followed on from the Creative Change project run by Norfolk County Council and worked with young people at risk of offending; it has also initiated the Arts Award. The project entailed a tailored programme of weekly, two-hour workshops. In phase 2.1 the Arts Centre worked with six fourteen-year-old boys from the Rosebery Centre, a local Pupil Referral Unit; in phase 2.2 three of the boys continued to be involved. The boys were non-academic (kinaesthetic) learners with a low attention span, and the project aimed to develop their social and practical skills and to celebrate their achievements. The project aimed to explore, assess and articulate the special learning benefits of working with contemporary art and the gallery space.

The Arts Centre has ten years’ experience in providing creative development opportunities within the gallery setting for vulnerable young people excluded from school or identified as ‘being at risk of offending’. The project developed appropriate programming for a group of vulnerable young people based at the Pupil Referral Unit. Led by artist educators, the young people engaged in activities such as papermaking, felt-making and animation, and then went on to teach some of their new skills to primary school children at a day workshop held at KLAC.

This is something we don’t have to do, but we enjoy it … We don’t have to be here. It’s just a thing we can choose to do, which we do … [I didn’t notice the art] as much as I do now.

I’ve got more into the feeling of how interesting it is. Before it was just an old painting on the wall … It’s made a difference, coming here. KLAC young person

- Fruitful Arts provides visual art workshops in galleries, museums and the community through collaboration with partner organisations. Set up in 2005 by artists Mandy Roberts and Tricia Hall, both qualified educators, this is an independent, flexible organisation that can manage, coordinate and deliver visual art projects in a range of settings.

Taking part in the project were:
Mandy Roberts, artist educator
Tricia Hall, artist educator

- OUTPOST is an artist-run gallery based in Norwich. It was founded in November 2004 with financial support from Arts Council England East, Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council and Norwich Gallery. OUTPOST is committed – in a region with few such venues – to the uncompromising presentation of contemporary art, resulting in a core programme of twelve exhibitions per year alongside a programme of events that includes film nights, critical forums, group exhibitions and artists’ talks. Its operating systems limit committee members to two years’ service in order to ensure that selection and organisational processes are prevented from becoming stale.

Taking part in the project were:
Anna Townley, artist educator and committee member
Robin Tarbet, artist (exhibiting)

- envision @ OUTPOST was a partnership established between the OUTPOST gallery and Fruitful Arts to coordinate this education project between July and November 2007. OUTPOST is an independent, artist-led space run by a voluntary management committee. Already engaged in a thriving programme of exhibitions and off-site activities, the gallery made arrangements with Fruitful Arts to attempt to progress the potential for connection and openness of the gallery to young people, and to help a group of young people to engage with their own artistic creativity. Young people from the NR5 Project in Norwich took part in a series of visual arts workshops, which were directly linked to the exhibition programme at the OUTPOST gallery. The project provided
an opportunity for the OUTPOST committee to experience the reactions and feedback of young people when encountering contemporary art in a gallery setting, and to work with professional artist educators to gain an insight into the methodologies and practicalities of working with young people.

NR5 into OUTPOST
'NR5 into OUTPOST' was a successful project led by Fruitful Arts at the gallery in 2006–7. Both Fruitful Arts and OUTPOST were keen to build further on this learning and experience. envision @ OUTPOST involved a series of twelve visual arts workshops, of approximately seventy-five minutes each, for extremely vulnerable young people aged between thirteen and fifteen - at risk of exclusion from school, with particular engagement needs, and who would benefit from creative diversionary activities to retain them within the education system. This is work that the NR5 Project delivers in partnership with the Earliam Full Service School. The workshops were designed and carried out by Fruitful Arts and responded to the exhibition programme of contemporary art at OUTPOST. The young people visited the OUTPOST gallery and worked on their own artworks both at OUTPOST and at a nearby project space used by various artists. The workshops aimed to help the young people to engage with their own artistic creativity; facilitate a greater understanding of creative processes; provide opportunities for collaboration between the young people and professional arts practitioners and educators; and encourage among young people a sense of connection with, and openness to, the gallery. A record of the project events and artwork was kept in a Project Diary and, at the end of project, the young people were asked what they had particularly enjoyed:

- Going to galleries to do art because I never used to go to galleries; and

- I would like to do something like this again.

NR5 into OUTPOST young people.

- NR5 (NR5 community education organisation, Earlham, Norwich) is a community-based project. NR5 provides school inclusion projects for young people aged thirteen to sixteen years, a two-year alternative curriculum programme, post-sixteen support, music, media and radio training, education films and DVDs and much more. It promotes social inclusion in its broadest sense, freedom of expression and the dissemination of information for the benefit of our local and wider communities. It uses music of all genres to promote racial and social harmony, embrace social, cultural and economic diversity, and promote tolerance, understanding and democracy.

NR5 was involved in two projects. Emma Cameron is art tutor to NR5 young people in Years 10 and 11. Emma and the Year 10 group worked with Fruitful Arts at OUTPOST. Emma and the Year 11 group visited the Sainsbury Centre with support from gallery guide, Len Wellings.

Taking part in the project were:
Emma Cameron, NR5 art tutor and arts coordinator
Len Wellings, SCVA guide

NR5 guided visits to the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts
The NR5 Project provides alternative education for excluded young people aged fourteen to sixteen. This project involved a group of nine Year 11 young people from NR5 and was headed up by the young people's NR5 tutor and arts coordinator. The project aimed to re-engage these vulnerable young people into the wider community and encourage them to access gallery spaces through visits to the SCVA. The project also aimed to enhance the students' understanding of art and art galleries to support their GCSE Art, and build an awareness of job opportunities/careers within galleries and museums.

A SCVA guide, Len Wellings, was specially selected to work with the young people in small groups to demonstrate his role and assist them in accessing the exhibitions. It is hoped that the project may lead eventually to some of the young people acting as guides for selected invitees of their choice, thus becoming the vehicle for others' inclusion in the gallery.

- Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts (SCVA) is the university art gallery and museum at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, and is situated in buildings designed by Foster and Partners. It houses a collection of world art containing work from 4000 BC to the present, a collection of Art Nouveau decorative arts and the UEA collection of abstract and constructivist art and design. It has six temporary exhibitions per year, often featuring
contemporary art and it has a thriving education programme and a new education studio at the heart of the gallery, which is being used for regular residencies for visiting artists, who engage actively with the public.

Taking part in the project were:  
Dr Veronica Sekules, Head of Education and Research  
Charlotte Peel, Education and Events Officer

SCVA enquire project  
SCVA established a young person’s group who called themselves ‘enquire’. They met fortnightly, after school, and moved from initial ideas of creating a book reflecting their responses to the gallery, to organising an event and exhibition about young people’s rituals. This was a peer-led group of young people who largely set their own agendas and brought some youth life into the Sainsbury Centre. The enquire group had a core of between five and nine young people aged over fifteen, who were recruited from local schools, through events such as creative careers fairs, and through personal contacts.

The young people wanted a teenage presence in the gallery, to encourage their contemporaries to come. They became familiar with the gallery and confidently set their own agendas and decided on activities. Their ideas and interests having shifted considerably, they became particularly interested in the idea of ritual – initially teenage ritual, but then broadly any ritual by any age group. The project has encouraged young peoples’ experimental programming in the Sainsbury Centre. They have organised interactive arts events at the SCVA Late Shifts and an event on the theme of 'Ritual' which they presented at a workshop at Documenta in Germany.

I'm not going to do that cheesy life-changing stuff, but it's really, really great. It's really artistically thriving. You can do whatever you like ... It's more than I ever thought would happen ... Since being here we've never wanted to leave, there's not enough time to look round everything ... There's not enough hours in the day. I had to take two sets of batteries with me each day as I took so many pictures. It was crazy. SCVA young person

Learning for empowerment: research findings

The findings are reported in three sections. The first section reports the ways in which the pedagogy of art educators involved in the East cluster projects contributed to the personal, social and citizenship development of young people, including disadvantaged and disaffected young people. The second section reports the adults' and young people's views on giving young people greater voice in the evaluation and programming of galleries, and discusses the evaluation methods used in this project. The third section reports young people's views of art and art galleries in young people's lives, and their views on how art galleries might increase youth participation.

1. Supporting the personal, social and citizenship development of young people as creative and responsible citizens

Introduction

Gallery education has a reputation for offering a different approach to pedagogy, offering a potentially more empowering form of education for all young people, and particularly for those young people who are disengaged from mainstream education. Gallery education has a pedagogical approach which seeks greater freedom in learning for young people: for instance, by giving them opportunities to take on greater responsibility for learning, to make choices, to become the experts, to learn together in partnership with adults. This is a pedagogy which Susan Hart refers to as ‘learning without limits’ (Hart 2004), and which Hooper-Greenhill and colleagues explore in The Educational Role of the Museum (1999), John Falk and Lynn Dierking in Learning from Museums (2000) and George Hein in Learning in the Museum (1998/2001).

It was clear that all the adults involved in the East cluster projects saw something special in art gallery education, partly because it engages with live art in exhibitions, but also because of the power of art educators’ pedagogical approach, which fits well with the government’s drive to give children and young people greater autonomy in their learning and development. In terms of Hart’s Ladder of Participation (Table 1), the gallery pedagogy enabled young people to participate in their learning at moderate to high levels.
The adults interviewed for the project talked about a range of opportunities provided by their projects for young people. Many of these opportunities related specifically to disaffected and excluded young people; some related only to more advantaged young people; others related to all young people. The following section describes the opportunities offered by the projects to young people. Table 2 (see right) lists these opportunities as overlapping layers of empowerment; the layers include evaluation and participation, which are discussed in section 2, p28.

**Nurturing self-esteem and broadening horizons for disadvantaged young people**
For many of the young people at risk, poor life chances meant that they needed to learn elemental social and personal skills. When the boys first came to KLAC, their behaviour was particularly challenging; art educators encouraged the boys simply to play. By starting out with simple tasks like potato printing — the kind of thing children might normally do with their parents — their confidence grew. These were needy young people, and it took time and small steps to build their skills, and encourage them to value their work and learn to value themselves. An artist working with the group commented, 'It is interesting that the older children would not cut their felt or paper. They wanted it whole and to use every bit.' The gallery educators were, effectively, nurturing the young people, as parents might.

By visiting the SCVA galleries, disaffected and challenging young people from NR5's Year 11 group learned new social skills, such as how to talk quietly in galleries and why it was not appropriate to touch some exhibits. With encouragement from their NR5 tutor and the SCVA guide, they were willing to engage in these new, sometimes strange, behaviours, learning social skills which more advantaged young people might learn from their families.

The young people also learnt to overcome their fears of being in a strange environment and, with encouragement from art educators and gallery staff, learnt to manage their behaviour better. It was rewarding to see how the challenging behaviour of disadvantaged young people working at SCVA, OUTPOST and KLAC never translated into a deliberate wish to harm any artwork, despite the anxiety of some adults and even though the young people were often working close to art pieces.
To be honest, there was a little bit of me that thought that – with a couple of those guys – damage could be an issue … We had to risk assess it. But … I think in some ways we thought from the beginning that, if we treat them the right way and handle it the right way, then they’d get a lot out of it … But they’ve grasped it, understood it. Adult

The gallery visits were beneficial for broadening the horizons of disadvantaged young people, and contributed to their social awareness and general knowledge: even healthy eating options were being encouraged by art educators.

These young people haven’t been to a gallery before, and sometimes didn’t even know what a gallery was … You’re not even talking about people who know who Shakespeare is. You’d have to tell them. You’re having to re-evaluate your own way of working. Adult

I think the young people I speak to are all in limbo. Historically the young people who are disengaged don’t really understand what they’re part of. Apart from the dynamics of their peer groups … If young people can start seeing society as something they feed into and they’re part of as a continual historical line as well – that’s empowerment. Adult

**Building social skills and self confidence**

Visiting the galleries repeatedly, and working there, helped all the young people to become more comfortable with gallery spaces, widening their access to new social contexts. Having a consistent link with the gallery was particularly beneficial in enabling disadvantaged young people to feel included in society.

They’ve come to the gallery of their own volition; they’re here engaging with people who are listening to them and respecting them … That is learning for empowerment, isn’t it? Everything about the social environment is about them learning how to behave in a completely new and possibly alien environment. But they’re learning some very good basic social skills about how to engage with visitors. Somehow, when we treat them with respect, they seem to really just absorb how to do it and they’re really personable and likeable. Adult

Art educators were keen to bolster the damaged self-esteem of the disaffected young people, to help them value themselves. Often with craft-based activities you make sure that someone who can do really good drawings doesn’t shine out and make the other drawings look poor. We always tailor it so that if they do this, this and this they’ll get a standard result … We really value their ideas and I think that helps – I don’t think they’re used to feeling valued. Adult

But the gallery projects helped to build the self-confidence and self-esteem of all the young people involved. One BFT interviewee said that she valued the project for encouraging her to take part into activities that boosted her self-confidence.

[We] at one point had to talk about the Arts Awards … [at] the Junction in Cambridge. It’s like a gig venue, theatre. It’s got lots of separate rooms. There was a careers fair there … I wasn’t pressured into doing it, but it’s not something I would have perhaps volunteered myself to do. But they asked me to and I’m glad I did it because, perhaps for me, it helped build up confidence and stuff. Young person

SCVA enquire young people, when interviewed, said that they felt they belonged at the gallery. They emphasised that they had been given free membership of the Friends of the Sainsbury Centre, had been included in the gallery’s brochure, and were invited to events, including meeting resident artists.

In all five projects, art educators ensured that they recognised the value of the young people’s ideas, were willing to take risks on their behalf, and helped the young people to increase their self-confidence. All the young interviewees were clear that the projects helped with their personal development, self-confidence and social skills.

**Choice and self-directed learning**

Art educators deliberately encouraged young people to make their own decisions about the development of their work. This meant that adults were not always in control of outcomes but risked leaving aspects of those final outcomes to the young people themselves.

Young people were encouraged to evaluate their work and progress. The gallery pedagogy empowered the young people by giving them the freedom to take control of their own learning and creativity.
Learning for empowerment: research findings

Well, the end product of this animation session hasn’t really been finalised yet. It’s hopefully going to be down to the kids. So they will have the empowerment of deciding the final product, if you like. Adult

We offered up things that could happen: Creative thinking, marketing, design … but they made it what it was. Adult

Direct contact with art in galleries was valuable to young people in making the art real and in raising their awareness of the place of art in our culture. That direct contact generated a greater interest and engagement in art than would have been effected merely by looking at books or postcards, and helped some disaffected young people to raise reflective questions about the value of art in our culture. One of the young people from the SCVA enquire group was particularly pleased at having personal contact with artists and their experiences, including different cultural experiences:

We’ve been offered lots of opportunities to meet a lot of artists … It’s really good for me. Because I’m still hoping to further my career as an artist, it’s really good to see creative minds of other artists. We came to a showing of Chinwe [Chukwuogo-Roy]. She sat there and explained it. It was really interesting knowing where her ideas come from. It’s all very well knowing the colours she uses and so on, but until she explains it you don’t know why they’re in the picture and why they look like they’re moving. They’re spirits of family members basically.

At the OUTPOST gallery, contemporary art engaged the interest of the ‘disengaged’ Year 10 young people from NR5, who came face to face with arresting objects and sometimes with young artists.

I think the thing with the Outpost gallery is that it’s much closer to their generation. The stuff that’s being produced there feels like it’s much closer to their generation. Adult

One of the BFT interviewees said that the gallery projects offered out-of-school opportunities not usually available through schools clubs, which tended to focus on sports. They enabled young people to take part in Silver and Gold Arts Award scheme, which was a good alternative to the Duke of Edinburgh Award:

It was offered to us right at the start, and I thought it sounded like a good thing to do. A lot of people did Duke of Edinburgh

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awards which isn’t really my kind of thing. The Arts Awards are a different angle on that. People do Duke of Edinburgh because it looks good on their CV, but I thought this was something I might enjoy doing.

Finding creativity and learning creative skills

The gallery projects empowered all the young people to find their own creativity, as well as enabling them to learn a range of new creative skills not offered by their schools.

It is also about … engaging with their own creativity and skills; finding out what they’re good at; finding out about how they communicate with other people; meeting new people. All those things are empowering aren’t they … and the exhibition at the end of it, that’s another empowering thing. Adult

The projects aimed to provide appropriate training in creative skills for the young people and, across the projects, young people learnt, for instance, the skills of screen printing, etching, animation, paper- and felt-making, drawing, spray painting, and creating natural and unnatural sculptures.

Citizenship and responsibility

All the projects provided plenty of opportunities for young people to advance higher-level social skills and to become involved in active citizenship, working both individually and collaboratively. One young member of BFT felt that the group had been a powerful tool for encouraging young people to learn about working together as a team:

I think when you do art you have strong opinions about what you want, and it was an experience taking on other people’s points of view. If you’re doing a group thing, then it’s a different ball game to just doing your own artwork at GCSE or A level. You can do what you want at A level and get the outcome you want. With a group you have to compromise, but usually the outcome is better. But you’ve got to keep that in mind and respect other people’s opinions.

BFT young people engaged in a group-building exercise, organised and staffed an event at Ely’s Apple Day celebrations at which they wore their own customised BFT T-shirts, and visited other galleries together. Members also represented the BFT at a careers fair in Cambridge. Once the boys at KLAC had learnt some creative skills themselves, such as paper- and felt-making,
they taught these skills to children from a local primary school at a day workshop. One of the boys from KLAC talked enthusiastically about teaching skills to children at the gallery workshop:

We taught the children to make paper out of scrap paper, shredded paper. And we're also doing felt-making, which I'm in charge of. I volunteered to do it. I volunteered to lead the felt-making, teach them how to do it ... I was quite nervous at first ... From there I got used to it and comfortable.

The SCVA enquire group learnt how to use Apple-mac software and Adobe Photoshop to design posters and fliers. They learnt how to write a press release and were interviewed for a local radio show. They travelled to Germany and put on a workshop for an adult audience at Documenta. Members of the group gave talks to young people in local sixth forms and engaged in promotional events at the SCVA.

They wanted lots of people to be involved ... they were very inclusive. They wanted people of all ages to contribute ... Recently they were sitting in the studio and a friend walked past. [One of the group] called them in and said, 'Join our group, we're trying to get more people involved in the gallery! We want to promote young people here.' I thought, wow, they really have bought into that. That surprised me, because I don't think at the beginning I'd have had the courage to set up a group with that aim for that age group. It would have felt like coercing them. But they've come up with it themselves, wanting young people to be a part of it. Adult

The SCVA enquire group is represented on the gallery advocacy group and Friends organisation and in the future they may get control of their own funding. The young people working with NR5 and the SCVA have established websites in My Space and Bebo. Through this the adults have become involved in learning about new communication methods and youth culture, which otherwise might not have happened.

**Enhancing the employability for young people**

The close contact with art and artists experienced by the young people was valuable in their accreditation at all levels, whether Art A level, GCSE or Arts Award. One of the young people wrote up his experience with the gallery for his A level examination, enabling him to demonstrate a real engagement with art.

Gallery and art educators at the Babylon and Kings Lynn galleries found the Arts Award approach helpful in advancing their form of teaching practice, although there was some concern that the level of adult input required for Arts Award would be difficult to sustain on a larger scale. Young people involved in BFT, KLAC and NR5 were engaged in Arts Award and the SCVA is considering Arts Award training for young people in its enquire group. Young people at the Babylon gallery achieved three Gold Arts Awards and four Bronze Arts Awards during the project's timescale.

Several of the young people across the projects found voluntary or paid work with the galleries. One BFT participant helped to install a show at the gallery for work experience. Two BFT participants are now working in the gallery at weekends and during holidays as attendants. One of these was able to use her experience to work with new young people's groups at the gallery, as well as following through by achieving the Gold Arts Award. She was very pleased with the opportunities the BFT had given her:

I think that's one of the big things to come out of it for me. There's no way I'd have got the job if I hadn't been there ... It seems it's maybe a job aimed at people older than me. Not that I'm not capable of doing it. But I only got it because I could show I was committed.

Young people in the SCVA enquire group were offered the opportunity of both voluntary and paid work at the gallery, involving a variety of activities and responsibilities with the gallery. Two of the young people now have contracts with the SCVA:

I'm now the studio technician so it opens up a lot of opportunities for me. I volunteer in studio workshops, and there's a lot of stuff that goes on here that a lot of people aren't aware of.

In the summer I did some work with an artist outside; he spray painted bikes. I was paid to work alongside him. I didn't expect to be paid; I'd have done it because I enjoyed it ... He came along and I just assisted him -- got him lunch and just shadowed him for the day.

They appreciated the feeling of trust that came with carrying out responsible work in the gallery:
I didn’t feel as much involved as I do now. I feel more trusted … They trusted me to bring in the [artist’s] work from her car … I had to bring that all down here alone, and that felt good to be trusted to do that.

One of the boys at KLAC will be doing his work experience with the arts centre, and this may lead to longer-term work there. He was very proud of this achievement and the art centre’s confidence in him:

They’re quite happy to let me help around … First time I come here I really liked it, and they liked to keep me on further. And I agreed to that. Now they’ve offered me work experience here … [I will] help set up the plays, move about all the bits, do the lighting.

KLAC hopes to establish a special unit at the arts centre for at-risk young people aged between fourteen and sixteen, offering them a permanent alternative form of education away from the constraints of the classroom. Young people might then be able to serve a form of apprenticeship in a working environment and take part in the Arts Award scheme linked to a whole programme of work in the working world.

KLAC is unusual among the East cluster galleries in being part of a larger arts centre offering a variety of arts activities. It is therefore in a position to offer a broad working experience for young people. However, KLAC demonstrates the potential for an alternative education for young people excluded from mainstream schools, which other galleries might want to consider.

I think they need to rethink where they put these youngsters. We never have any behaviour issues from these people here with us. We have visitors, counsellors, artists come in. Adult

For many members of the BFT and SCVA enquire groups, involvement in the projects contributed to their next steps in art education. Moreover, because the skills being acquired by the young people were so wide-ranging, one of the SCVA enquire participants was using his experience to help him pursue a career in social work:

I’m doing social work at university … I use the skills I learnt here. I’m a youth support worker for a youth offending group … I try to organise to bring them down to the Sainsbury Centre and do some work with them.

The challenges of risk-taking pedagogy and some solutions
Adults involved in the East cluster projects were committed to alternative and more engaging forms of education. They wanted young people to have the freedom to learn for themselves and the autonomy to make their own choices to further their personal, social and citizenship development. But their work involved risks and presented some challenges, particularly, though not exclusively, when working with the disadvantaged young people.

Working with disadvantaged and disaffected young people
put pressures on art educators when they were working in galleries: there were concerns about protecting the exhibits; worries about other gallery visitors being disturbed or responding negatively; and difficulties with inconsistent attendance, including problems with special educational units using attendance at the gallery in its rewards and sanctions. The young people’s behaviour could be unpredictable and their attendance erratic. Educators needed to be sensitive to the broad reasons for the young people’s challenging behaviours and their frequent negative responses to the galleries’ best efforts.

The challenge of working with young people at risk cannot be underestimated. It can be very rewarding, but it can also be highly frustrating and difficult:

I think we do it because we like a challenge … and I think we feel very strongly that when we work with these young people they’ve got no real parental support and often have stressful circumstances and, as just another human being, we feel compassion for them. Most people don’t want to bother to work with them because they’re hard work … I don’t want to mention any names, but some of them already had ASBOs, some were hospitalising people, some just refused to attend school. And once you start seeing their engagement, even from day one, it’s really rewarding.

Evidence drawn from the project shows that it is essential to have experienced art educators working with young people, and especially with disadvantaged young people. As one interviewee said:

[There is] a big difference between artists running workshops, and art educators … It’s a way of engaging,
especially difficult kids … [If galleries] really want these young people, who are disengaged, to start … re-engaging them or finding out how they sit in the world, then they’ve got to find art educators who can work with those people in those spaces. Because just throwing an artist into a room with them isn’t going to work.

Evidence also identifies a need for collegial support, and for space – for understanding, for communication to develop sensitivity, and to offload frustrations. The opportunities for communication between different practitioners helped to build the confidence of those partners who were relatively new to working with young people at risk.

You cannot predict what’s going to happen week to week … One week you think you’ve cracked it, the next you haven’t. One week you think a smaller number is a great thing, the next it’s not … Dynamics, the stuff they bring into the session, is a factor … The baggage … There was a patch … where they’re going to test you, are you going to hang in on there … And I do think that’s what happened last time and I think that’s what’s happening this time. What we learnt last time, which has carried over to this time, is just not to take anything for granted. Adult

A problem identified during the projects was the lack of substantial time and opportunity for such collegial support. All the adults involved were under enormous time constraints and weren’t able to give as much time as they would have liked to such conversations.

Working with advantaged and motivated young people was a positive experience because they were so talented and creative, but it could be frustrating when they didn’t fulfil their obvious high potential. In particular, highly motivated young people have very busy lives, and A levels can get in the way of extracurricular activities, such as those offered by the art galleries. In fact, all the galleries and art educators, for different reasons, suffered from the tension of not knowing how many young people were going to turn up at any session. Because of inconsistent attendance, the Babylon gallery decided not to continue with the BFT group but to use the experience gained from that project to move in a different direction:

The fragility of it is just too much to manage on top of everything else, really. Wondering if anyone’s going to show up at all or not on a Monday evening is a very hard factor to deal with … And obviously we’re very aware of economic factors. If you start feeling that this money can be better spent elsewhere, which is what was happening, then I think it’s time to look at things and revise.

Projects did involve gallery educators in risks, but when it worked it was rewarding, fun and exhilarating.

The East cluster project has forged an invaluable learning partnership, and especially between KLAC, NR5 and Fruitful Arts, who share a particular interest in working with young people at risk. This kind of partnership working is dependent on networking rather than formal structures and the project helped to spread and extend the network, improving the potential for further work to be carried out with young people at risk in the region.

The networking … makes such a difference. Knowing who to phone at the right time, and where, can make things go twice as fast. And if you can understand the agenda of that person and where they’re coming from then that’s easier.

It’s a great networking opportunity. We don’t really know the cluster members and what they do. That was a great benefit … And, of course, other people’s experiences, and case studies and anecdotes. Things stick in your head, don’t they?

NR5 has built links with OUTPOST and the SCVA which they hope to use in the future with new cohorts of young people at risk. Fruitful Arts will continue to work with NR5 and has begun further work with school-based units for young people at risk. Their work with the NR5 projects has given them the experience and confidence to take the ideas forward in different locations. For NR5 the project has made a major contribution to wider networking and easier access to the galleries for NR5 young people.

I think what it’s done is that it’s made it quicker for me to have a relationship with the gallery and a quicker way and more sympathetic way of accessing the gallery space and them, which I might not have had time to do otherwise, or might have been convoluted, or I couldn’t give the attention or commitment it needed. Adult
2. Participation and evaluation: finding ways to include young people's voices

Introduction
A major objective of the research was to investigate how to create greater opportunity for young people to participate in the arts and art galleries. Consideration of this question led to the separating out of two forms of ‘participation’. The first is about enabling young people to participate in evaluation, programming and ownership of the gallery space. The second is about encouraging greater participation by young people in the arts and art galleries. This section discusses the participation of young people in evaluation and programming; the following, third, section reports what the young people had to say about encouraging greater participation of young people in the arts and art galleries.

Galleries and museums need to give consideration to government policy concerns for greater participation of children and young people in the evaluation and running of institutions, and galleries and museums also need to give attention to young people's voices as a means to widening their audience.

This section reports the findings of interviews with the adult participants about young people's involvement in evaluation, programming and exhibiting in galleries, as well as the views of young people about how they were, and would like to be, included in evaluation and programming, and in using gallery space. It begins by describing some of the evaluation methods adopted by young people in the different projects.

Exploring approaches to young people's evaluation
Gallery educators felt that it would be very difficult for the disadvantaged young people to take part in meaningful routine evaluation of galleries and gallery education. Positive attendance and continued engagement were suggested as more appropriate evidence of success.

I'd say if you wanted to evaluate the success of this project, you'd say these youngsters have come back every time ... The fact they're here. They've come of their own accord today when they could have stayed at home. They'd be absent from school but wouldn't care about that. We're looking at a much lower-level assessment and evaluation.

We'd say 'how can this be improved?' ... all those things you'd ask young people who are academically able. It would be difficult to engage in that conversation with these youngsters. Adult

It was felt that more could be learnt from the young people by working with them rather than by getting formal feedback:

I think what we're learning is about our behaviour; how we need to be accessible and not superior. We're constantly learning that. When they come up and speak to you, you realise you've got through a barrier. I think just be aware that these young people have a particular expectation of adults, particularly if they're in authority ... So actually I think we're constantly learning ... You learn how to be around them.

Achieving meaningful evaluation from children and young people is a challenge. In order to investigate whether young people could evaluate galleries and gallery education, and how they might take part in user evaluation on a routine basis, young people were asked to evaluate their projects using a variety of methods. Both the adults and young people discussed and experimented with, a number of mechanisms for obtaining the evaluations of the young people.

Questionnaires
Questionnaires are a helpful and commonly used method of gathering anonymous evaluations but they were not popular among the majority of adults involved in the East cluster projects as a routine mechanism for collecting young people's evaluations. Those working with disaffected young people felt that the young people would not want to complete questionnaires because of literacy difficulties.

Across the projects, the young people agreed. With one exception, young people were not keen on completing questionnaires.

I don't particularly like questionnaires. I prefer to just get asked questions. I think it's best if you just voice your opinion to the actual person ... At art foundation they had these questionnaires and no one could be bothered to fill them in properly. Young person
The Year 11 NR5 group completed questionnaires reluctantly and minimally. Although the SCVA enquire young people had completed a questionnaire in the first phase of the project, they couldn't remember doing so and said that they weren't keen on filling them in. They were critical of the process because, for instance: 'It feels a bit like an exam', 'There's only a certain amount you can fit in', 'Some people hate writing', and because, essentially, questionnaires are a 'bit boring'.

However, as this report was being written up, Fruitful Arts successfully used the envision questionnaires to complete their envision evaluation; they helped the young people to complete the questionnaires in groups and encouraged them to respond to evaluation questions by spray painting the questions on large boards and asking the young people to spray paint their answers. This 'creative questionnaire' produced short but positive responses from the young people.

**Photographs and video**

Galleries and art educators experimented with a variety of different forms of more creative evaluation: keeping personal sketchbooks, for example, and taking photographs, and making videos of experiences and opinions during the course of the projects. All the projects used video and photographs in some way as an alternative and more creative form of evaluation – photography and video were a natural choice for young people, who were keen to photograph and video everything – and partly because to do so was in line with the recommendations of the Arts Award.

Right from the very first day they came here, which was in a previous project, they were encouraged to use the camera and recorder. They haven't got the writing skills so they don't do that – they don't like writing. They don't feel comfortable.

**Adult**

Photos and videos were a helpful way of recording the projects, and looking back at them was a natural way of talking about what had been achieved, generating discussion and reflection among adults and young people for informal evaluation.

[Video] seemed the fairest way. We'd started by filming them, and been clear that we'd like to film them and would like their thoughts as we went along ... We'd been filming all the way through, so it seemed more sensible to use something they were familiar with rather than introducing another new thing.

**Adult**

Photos and videos were generally recorded onto a DVD and stored on a computer; in one case, photos were kept in a Project Diary, along with other evidence. Photographic records such as this were invaluable for demonstrating visually for Arts Award, or, indeed, for a researcher, the progress and opinions of the young people. The SCVA young people showed their photographs at conferences, using them to reflect back and evaluate their experience of the project. The NR5 Project Diary was shown to the OUTPOST gallery committee.

**Guided discussion**

Evaluation with the two NR5 groups was carried out through a discussion during an art lesson at NR5. The discussion was guided by their NR5 tutor and observed by the researcher, who also added some questions. The researcher also interviewed four of the NR5 Year 10 students, in groups of two. The NR5 Year 11 young people also completed a one-page questionnaire provided by the researcher. Classroom discussion was time-consuming but generated more detailed evaluation from these young people, who were nervous of being interviewed by a researcher and unenthusiastic about writing answers on a questionnaire.

The NR5 Year 10 group included some valid and helpful criticisms and recommendations in their evaluation (appendix 3). Their views were fed back to the gallery committee and influenced the choice of activities undertaken by Fruitful Arts with the young people. The NR5 Year 11 young people recommended that the SCVA could be improved for young people by making it more colourful and exciting, having more artwork that young people would like, and having better directional signs – to the cafés, for instance – so that people could find their way around more easily in the space.

**Talking face to face**

Where art educators worked more closely with young people and over a longer period of time – in the SCVA enquire project, and the BFT and KLAC projects – it was possible to build up closer relationships between the adults and young people, so that adults were able to talk with the young people and learn
from them through direct conversation. For the young people involved in these projects this seemed to be the best mechanism for evaluation, and young people preferred to voice their opinions face to face:

They're nice people so you can talk to them ... We did a bit of screen printing, but I think everyone had done some and they were [pitching it at] beginners. So we had a little bit of feedback on that. And they listened to that.

They're more like friends than colleagues at the end of it. They bend over backwards for us.

I think they did listen to us as a group.

In general, these young people appeared to be comfortable discussing ideas with adults at these galleries. Building up a relationship of trust between the adults and young people ensures that discussion can be open and honest, and in this cluster, where it worked best, healthy criticism was encouraged as part of the power-sharing relationship between adults and young people.

Developing a power-sharing relationship was explored more deeply in two of the projects which aimed for 'peer-led groups' but took different approaches: one group were given complete freedom to make their own choices, without adult interference, while the other took a power-sharing, 'round-table' approach, allowing adults to support and feed into the young people's plans. This latter approach seemed better able to help the young people achieve their ideas.

I have realised in the last few months that we have established a method of working that has qualities in common with the preschool projects in Reggio-Emilia in Italy where they encourage children to take the lead in the context of supportive and collaborative adults. They are working with tiny children but our project was led by teenagers. We share their philosophy of empowerment of young people in a non-hierarchical exploratory environment. So they learn by example, through discussion, sharing of skills and experiment. Adult

All the art educators involved in the projects were committed to the development of a non-hierarchical relationship between adults and young people, but the relationship was found to work best when adults supported young people by offering them opportunities and choices.

Ownership of the gallery space

Young people involved in each of these projects had become more familiar with galleries as a result of this work. They were now much more comfortable in galleries and felt a sense of ownership of the space; some even felt they belonged there.

Some young people had hoped to exhibit in the gallery, however, and to gain ownership of the space in this sense. Although Fruitful Arts had exhibited some of the NR5 young people's work at the OUTPOST gallery the previous year; and SCVA had shown the enquire group's 'ritual' project, it was clear that young people could not realistically expect to exhibit in a gallery, at least not through the normal routes. The enquire group's experience of being able to show their work – at Documenta and on several occasions in the SCVA, especially on their Wednesday evening Late Shift – was unusual.

In response to the reality of this challenging situation, enquire cluster art educators were actively seeking innovative ways to include the young people's work in their galleries. The Babylon gallery has now established an Ely Open Exhibition, to which any local artist can contribute.

What I did in the end was call for an Ely Open Exhibition, which is what we're going to have. So any resident from East Cambridgeshire can submit a work for possible selection in the Christmas show. So obviously any of those 15–20 members or carers are free to do that. So we'll see, that'll be interesting. Adult

The first of these open exhibitions ran successfully at the end of 2007 and included work from four local young artists, two of whom also achieved Gold Arts Awards in December 2007.

KLAC is about to establish an online gallery website with scope to find emerging local artists, and local young people, such as those who attend KLAC's weekend art club, could theoretically put on an exhibition in the art centre.

We have an art club and every couple of years they'll have their own exhibition of children's work. They're a group that work together. If young people got together and formed their own group and said we'd like to have an exhibition then there's no reason why we couldn't consider it. Adult
The East cluster project prompted the adult participants to push for a two-week exhibition of the young people's work: called *entitled*, the exhibition will run at the SCVA 3-13 January 2008. The SCVA *enquire* young people, who were interviewed after this news broke, were very excited to be involved in such an exhibition and were enthusiastically planning a participatory display for the event.

**Getting to the heart of programming**

The government’s *Every Child Matters* programme encourages institutions to include young people in their planning and governance. This is a challenge for any institution but a broad range of stakeholder, staff and management agendas in galleries creates a complex context that necessarily constrains the involvement of young people at this kind of level.

Additionally, it was felt that disadvantaged young people had only an elementary understanding of art and galleries, and moreover that they lacked the motivation to participate at that level.

It’s not just because they’re young. It’s because their knowledge of the scene is limited … From our point of view, we just thought they don’t know. That sounds slightly snobby, but they’ve got no frame of reference. How could they go out and find an artist? … These kids are definitely not going to do that. They’re not motivated enough to do that. (Adult)

Adult interviewees at the Babylon and SCVA galleries thought that there was some potential for young people to contribute to the choice of shows. While they acknowledged that this could be challenging, some inroads had been made into this difficult territory. One of the BFT young people had been to committee meetings and the SCVA has an existing formal mechanism for young people to be included in programming.

The liaison group – it would be good to get an *enquire* [young] person on that. The Sainsbury’s Centre liaison group has representatives from the university, young people, general public, friends, who we talk about forthcoming events and exhibitions with. … There are two spaces for young people. Adult

In general, however, adults had reservations about whether this level of participation would be a suitable activity for young people. Young people appeared to agree with the adults that this might be impractical but had some guarded interest in attending regular committee meetings.

I think it’s definitely something that, if it could work, would be good. But I don’t know how it would work. I don’t know much about how they choose the exhibitions but I don’t imagine it’s the easiest thing. Young person

I think it would be a good concept to see. I don’t know whether I would want to go on it. I’ve not been in that situation before so I don’t know my views and whether I would speak out. But if I did, if I really felt strongly about something, that would be great. Young person

The SCVA *enquire* young people felt that they were able to express their ideas about the gallery through the art educators, who acted as their advocates.

We are really involved in the Sainsbury’s Centre. We’re not pushed aside … We do get our voices heard … Charlotte’s always taking our views down. She’s always noting things down. She comes back the next week and says we’ve done this, this is ok. It’s something I really wasn’t expecting her to come back, especially not that quickly. But we really are heard here. It’s really great … They’re more like friends than colleagues at the end of it. They bend over backwards for us. Young person

For instance, the *enquire* group had suggested that children and young people should be able to draw on the new studio’s glass windows – a floor-to-ceiling wall of glass panels opening onto the gallery walkway – and this idea was enthusiastically taken up by the gallery.

They went out and bought window pens and chalk pens. A window of colour. It was good to see that happen – I’d never done that before. Now it’s just an ongoing thing. We managed to get that heard. There’s a lot of people that stop and look at them in the corridor. Young person

The young people’s more irreverent approach to the gallery had been welcomed by the SCVA and particularly appreciated by the art educators.
Fun. I like the slight subversiveness of it. The fact we can allow them to be a bit naughty and a bit wacky and they will bomb up to people on the late shift and ask them questions out the blue. I love encouraging that ... I think a similar thing is coming from the late shift, because it's just bursting with informal creativity. Adult

The gallery educators were having some success, then, in including young people in evaluation and programming, but this is a challenging policy innovation for all institutions and not just for galleries. Government may wish young people to take a greater participation role in their services, including extending their education into a wider range of community spaces, but the main priority of galleries is promoting art and artists, and education is only a part of their work.

This gallery is aimed at giving artists a push up the ladder or to bring in international work, which will improve the profile of the gallery. So you're caught between those two things. Adult

Conclusions
Galleries are under pressure from a number of competing stakeholders and the context is complex in terms of power sharing. Furthermore, budgets for gallery education are incredibly low. The funding for this project enabled galleries to make a longer-term commitment to a group of young people but promising young people that they can contribute to programming or participate in gallery education planning may be unrealistic in this fragile funding context. It is vital that adults are honest with young people about the extent of their power: as one adult interviewee said, 'We talk all the time, informally ... I'd rather be part of it on an equal level and have an open discussion than pretend they have autonomy, which they don't.' This means young people's expectations must be managed carefully and realistically.

In terms of Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation (Table 1), then, as was shown in section 1, young people were participating in their gallery education at moderate to high levels; however, they were participating at generally lower levels in terms of gallery programming and evaluation. As was said in the introduction to the findings, however, there is a growing discussion in the literature about the pragmatics of children's and young people's participation. Participation needs to be examined closely to ensure that practical and meaningful forms, which reflect the realities, are developed. Creating a culture of participation in galleries and museums, though certainly vital, must be an even more challenging objective than it is, for instance, in schools, but this project has been an opportunity to look closely at how to listen more carefully to young people. Young people do have important things to say, as is shown in the next section, and their increasing involvement in evaluation and programming of galleries could help to increase the number of young people participating in the arts and art galleries.

3. Encouraging greater participation of young people in the arts and art galleries - the young people's perspective
This final section reports the views of the young people on the role of art in their own lives, on young people and art galleries, and puts forward their suggestions for how galleries could become more youth-friendly. One important aim of the research was to examine how more young people could be persuaded to visit art galleries and participate in opportunities offered by the art gallery. Adult interviewees working with disadvantaged young people were aware that this was a particularly challenging audience to bring on board, but each of the galleries hoped to find out how to improve participation and access for all young people.

So if they can hang around McDonald's on a Saturday morning, then why not come in here? Adult

The East cluster young people's initial response to galleries
Visiting art galleries was a new experience for most of the young people and getting involved in art projects was unexplored territory for all of them. The boys at KLAC said that they had chosen to come to the project and had chosen to stick with it: as one of them said, 'I could have stayed at home. One of them described how his impression of the gallery had changed: when he first came to KLAC he had thought, 'Just an old building. I didn't know what was going on till I got in. Then I really enjoyed it.' The SCVA enquire young people said they had been nervous about coming to the gallery at first but their experiences with the project had well exceeded their expectations, particularly the experience of autonomy.

I came here, I thought, 'Maybe I'd get a higher grade [in A level Art] but I'm not going to want to be here every week.'
It could have been, ‘Oh my God, they’re going to make me do this!’ The first session they were like, ‘Go into the gallery, get your ideas and do whatever you want!’ It was great. They didn’t say, ‘You have to use these materials and do this.’ Young person

They found the gallery a little strange at first but soon relaxed into it and became very keen to encourage other young people to join the SCVA enquire group.

Originally it was a lot different to how it is now. Because a lot of us didn’t know each other it wasn’t as relaxed as it could be ... As you became more involved it became more casual to us. That’s the kind of thing we wanted to help young people feel, it being very casual and fun. Young person

For most of the young people, the welcome they received from the adults helped them to overcome any initial anxieties they had about coming into this new environment. Several young interviewees referred appreciatively to the friendliness of the adults across the galleries.

They welcomed us with open arms really. Young person

I think it’s a nice environment. They know what they’re doing. White walls. It looks clean. They’re friendly. Young person

The role of art in the young people’s lives

The projects worked with very different groups of young people who were at different starting points in their relationship with the arts.

For the young people at KLAC and NR5, art was not a part of their lives outside the projects. They welcomed the opportunity to do art at the gallery, and one of the boys at KLAC said he liked to draw but he could not draw at home because, ‘I haven’t got paper. I would if I’d got paper.’ The visits to the SCVA had impacted on most of the NR5 Year 11 group who were able to recall many of the art objects they had seen in the gallery on their short tours with Len Welling, the SCVA guide; one of the boys had developed an interest in the work of Francis Bacon because of a painting he had seen at the SCVA. Despite persistently not appearing to be interested in the gallery, the NR5 young people were keen to keep visiting, and their questionnaire answers showed that they all wanted to visit other galleries as well.

These young people had only rarely been to galleries and museums, and only in organised groups. Some of the NR5 Year 11s had been to the OUTPOST gallery during the previous year, as part of a different project, but most had not visited a gallery before coming to NR5. Being involved in the projects has made these young people more aware of the art in the galleries, and several felt they would return to galleries in the future. For these disadvantaged young people, the galleries had triggered an interest in art and artists.

[I didn’t notice the art] as much as I do now. I’ve got more into the feeling of how interesting it is. Before it was just an old painting on the wall ... It’s made a difference, coming here. Young person

Art, however, was already a major part of the lives of the young people in the BFT and SCVA enquire groups. At the time of the project they were studying Art A level, and the majority were going on to study art at a higher level. Most were familiar and comfortable with galleries and with art, and were keen and motivated – even ambitious. For these young people, being involved in the projects had not made the role of art in their lives more important, but it had given them much-appreciated opportunities to explore art in new ways and to learn new skills, both artistic and social.

Drawing young people into art galleries

Although the young people enjoyed their experience in the art gallery projects, most of them thought it would be difficult to persuade other young people to visit art galleries, unless they were already involved in art. Surprisingly, the Year 10 young people at NR5 did say they would be willing to try to encourage more young people to come to galleries. However, the Year 11 young people at NR5 and most of the young interviewees felt that young people generally simply didn’t think about galleries as an option.

That’d be a bit hopeless really ... I don’t talk about it. No one would understand really. Young person

Schools, like sixth form, try to encourage us to go to galleries ... But now that I’m in a class of people just doing art, it’s easier. We’re forced to go to art galleries. And then people realise they enjoy it and go more. I think it’s just getting used
to it and going to art galleries more. But sometimes there’s no need, and a lot of people don’t know it’s there. Young person

I think if I was on my own there’s no way I’d have gone into the art gallery … It’s all right if you’re maybe in a group of people but they’re quite intimidating places. Young person

Do you mean my friends? That would just be a lost cause. No one really wants to come here and look at art. All my mates would rather be out getting pissed. There would be no point, really. Young person

On the whole, most of the young people involved in the project thought it unlikely that their friends could be persuaded to visit galleries or get involved in gallery projects. Galleries were something young people did not understand and even found intimidating.

**Interacting and communicating with young people**

The SCVA *enquire* young people were more optimistic, however. They had been involved in staging small arts events at the SCVA and elsewhere and were very keen to draw more young people into the gallery and the *enquire* group. They felt that younger people were attracted to interactive art, where children and young people could feel more involved.

They’ve got a book in reception where you can write comments about the gallery. But it would be interesting if you could see where people have more space to write. A place they can sit down and write about the artwork. A place they can sit down and spend time … We’ve done the *Late Shift*. People took a piece of paper and wrote about it and put it next to the thing. We had to get loads of permission to do that in the gallery – having pens next to a piece of Monet’s work. But we had such a great response. Great to see all these people’s responses. Young person

The *enquire* group had enjoyed staging events at the SCVA that interacted with the young people and children who visited the gallery. They felt this was important in attracting a younger audience to the gallery.

Our exhibitions that we’ve done, we’ve had a lot of young children and parents come along and do things … We really work on the interactive side of things. We like to do our own art, but it’s nice to see our art being created with our ideas and our starting point and seeing it created by other people … Things you can see and touch. A lot of stuff in galleries you can’t touch. Because the point of this was to get younger people involved … so we aim it at everyone, so anyone can come along and be interactive with the gallery. Young person

Because their own experience had been quite different, they felt it was vital to change young people’s perception that galleries were rule-bound and restricting.

A lot of people see galleries as – it’s not the same as a library, but they see it as something like that. You have to be quiet. You can’t be interactive with it. You can’t do this, and can’t do that. The thing we’re trying to do is to say you can have feelings about the art. You can express them. If you don’t like it then you don’t like it. Young person

They also thought that the SCVA permanent exhibition had less potential to attract young people than the temporary exhibitions, which tended to be more colourful, vibrant and exciting. The SCVA temporary exhibitions when the young people were interviewed – *Alien Nation* and *Eye Music* – were, they felt, particularly good examples.

[The temporary exhibitions] change regularly, so it’s always good. It’s always fun to see the new stuff. The permanent exhibition – one can only look at a piece of art so much. I have got favourite pieces of art in the permanent. The dancer – I love how her skirt’s made from material. Young person

They thought that many young people would not realise how varied the exhibitions could be or that there were activities in galleries for young people to get involved in.

I’d been to the gallery two or three times before on school trips and things, but I didn’t know they’d done anything here for young people. Young person

Young people pointed to the need for galleries to advertise their youth activities vigorously in local schools, and perhaps also in youth clubs and sports centres, and to make direct contact with art teachers. They said that schools and art teachers needed to be informed about these projects so that they could encourage young people to come along. Schools are familiar with giving out information about clubs and activities and would gladly include information on a gallery project. They said that direct contact
with art teachers was particularly important so that teachers could encourage nervous young people to take part: the SCVA interviewees had joined enquire partly because they had been emboldened by the fact that their art tutor had come along with them at the start.

Another interviewee suggested advertising the projects through email groups.

Offering opportunities to learn skills and explore their own creativity
Galleries’ activities centre on art exhibitions and funding bodies encourage, and therefore expect, galleries to focus their educational offer on live exhibitions. However, many of the young people appeared to be less interested in exhibitions and more interested in getting involved in creative activities and learning new skills. Across all the projects, the young people most enjoyed experiences where ‘you make stuff’ or where ‘It’s more hands on.’ For example, one of the boys from KLAC described his enjoyment of creating his own felt design:

You get more texture in felt and you can make something yourself. Whereas the papermaking is just straightforward making the paper, so it’s already done for you … the felt-making you can design your own and create your own picture on the pillow, and stitch it all up. Young person

The printing and etching workshops were much appreciated by the BFT young people, and they enjoyed working with a young artist, Emily.

There were two weekends doing printing and etching … That was really good. Great fun and I think everyone enjoyed it. Young person

Well, screen printing I learnt. Etching, I learnt those skills. But that’s kind of led me in a different direction with my own work … I’m really interested in etching now, it’s my favourite way to work. I really love that. Young person

The NR5 Year 10 group enjoyed the sessions where they could use tools and create pieces of artwork. In their group evaluation (see appendix 3) they said that the project could be improved if more time were spent on learning skills such as spray painting or doing art that used different tools. Fruitful Arts responded to this evaluation by offering a spray-painting session and went on to use spray painting in their end-of-project evaluation for envision. Asked what they had most enjoyed during the whole project, several of the NR5 Year 10 young people referred to the spray painting:

The Unit 5 and spray painting.

When we done the spray painting with Tricia and the other art we done.

One of the boys in the NR5 Year 11 group had enjoyed screen printing on one of the visits to the SCVA and wished that they could have engaged in more art activities when they visited the gallery.

All the young people who evaluated the projects appreciated having opportunities to learn new art skills and engage in hands-on activities. In fact, interviewees from the SCVA enquire and BFT groups were surprised at how many activities the galleries were willing, and able, to fund for the young people:

I was really quite surprised. The workshops at Curwen were really quite expensive, and I was surprised we could do that. It was a good thing. Young person

It may be that the offer of arts skills, and overt advertising of the offer of art skills, would encourage more young people to engage in the arts and in gallery education and, ultimately, in the exhibitions themselves.

Organisation and structure
There were a few complaints from some young people about poor organisation (they sometimes did not hear about meetings) or poor conditions (such as the state of the toilet), or the problem of not knowing what the long-term future of the project would be. They felt the best sessions were those which were structured, with organised activities, with information given to the young people about the options open to them, and with the use of an artist to work with them and help them build up their skills.

There needs to be some freedom, but it needs to be structured … And more specific directions … you kind of need someone to push you on and stuff … Young person

More organised activities. Definitely. More notice made of what we’re good at and what we’re not good at … Well, if someone hasn’t quite got the hang of something then they
could ease them along. Give them something easier to do and build it up. Young person

Balancing different abilities and skills levels, along with the need to overcome practical problems, could at times lead to frustration, so that one young person, when asked what they'd learnt from the project, replied, 'Patience!' But young people felt that any frustrations were worthwhile, given the huge overall benefits of being involved.

Age group targeting
During the interviews, a difference of opinion emerged between the BFT and the SCVA enquire young people about the best age group to target for ‘out-of-school’ groups. BFT interviewees felt that it would be better to target a younger age group: those aged between twelve and sixteen – as the gallery has done, in fact – because older young people are under so many pressures.

Towards the end I was concentrating on A levels. It was a shame. I reckon there was potential … But I got really busy with A levels and things like that. Maybe communication faltered a bit … I’m not sure if it can work with a small group. People come and go and it would be hard to organise. Sooner or later I’ll have to go to university. I suppose that’s why they should get the younger end involved. The trial period didn’t really do it justice … It’s a good idea but I’m not sure if it can work, just because of the age range. People are doing different things. It would take a lot of organising to do. It’s a lot of hassle. Young person

A younger group would be good. They’re not doing GCSE and A level – a lot of pressure. I think younger ones would find it a lot more fun. Young person

However, the SCVA interviewees didn’t agree and felt A level and GCSE Art students were the best audience to target for this kind of activity; they suggested a maximum age of twenty-two.

I think people of our age, to catch them at A levels – maybe in the first year when they’re first being creative, that would be good. But we don’t have anyone older than eighteen at the moment. We’re all eighteen apart from [one member], and he was only fifteen, which made it difficult for him to come to meetings. He was the youngest. He still does try and tag along once in a while, but he does geography trips and has other stuff on. But basically, all of us are eighteen turning nineteen. We all get along quite well … I don’t think we’d go massively younger because there might be bridges. Young person

The enquire group still has members but individuals are tending to move on so attendance has, in fact, become more erratic, rather as it has in the BFT group. The SCVA interviewees felt it was important to keep the group going into the future. Both groups wanted to continue with the project for a bit longer.

Hopefully it keeps going. I’ll be here as long as I can. At least the end of August next year before I go off to university. I’ll always keep in contact and see what’s going on. See how much of an impact we made on doing things. Young person

These young people were actively seeking out new recruits by giving talks to local sixth forms and talking to young people at the university and during gallery openings. Working very much as a team, they became successful advocates, speaking in schools and at other art galleries, demonstrating that young arts ‘champions’ can be invaluable in encouraging greater participation of young people in the arts.

Youth art culture
Some of the young people were using alternatives to art galleries, such as online art communities, Facebook and Bebo. One of the NR5 Year 11 boys, who was keen on graffiti art and DJs – and involved himself – would have liked art galleries to reflect his art tastes more; he had clearly learnt about graffiti art himself and from sources other than galleries. Another interviewee was impressed by the work of Banksy. Although the boy from NR5 was impressed by a large, graffiti-like art piece in the SCVA Alien Nation exhibition, it may be true that young people’s art culture is not yet be reflected in galleries, especially smaller, regional ones.

Conclusion
Overall, then, the young people involved in the project recognised that many young people are not keen to participate in the arts and art galleries. However, they also demonstrated that once young people get through the doors, they very much enjoy the experience of being involved in art galleries and projects. The young people had initially found art galleries intimidating but had been drawn in by the friendly welcome they
had received and had stayed because of the wide range of exciting and valuable experiences they had been surprised to find in the galleries.

They felt that more young people might be drawn into the arts and galleries if gallery opportunities were better communicated to young people, particularly through schools.

They suggested that exhibitions could be better suited to young people – by being more lively and interactive, perhaps, or by dealing with youth culture. The opportunities offered by galleries to young people to learn new skills and to explore their own creativity were noted as particularly valued.

The young people demonstrated that they can make a valuable contribution to the discussion about how to increase young people’s participation in the arts, and that young people themselves can be invaluable advocates for the arts and art galleries.

Conclusions

Gallery education and the social empowerment of young people

This project demonstrated that gallery education offers a range of opportunities for young people’s social empowerment. Many of these opportunities are dependent on the creative and collaborative pedagogical approach taken by gallery educators. In particular, gallery education pedagogy can be a powerful tool for nurturing disadvantaged young people because it values the smallest achievements as significant, enabling young people to gain self-esteem. But the projects and the pedagogical approach were of equal value to both the supported and least supported young people involved, and equally valuable in advancing the social empowerment and citizenship development of all young people.

Young people valued and were eager to take up the many opportunities for voluntary and paid work offered by the galleries. Galleries also have the potential to offer young people, and especially disadvantaged and excluded young people, alternative educational opportunities in the form of apprenticeships.

Gallery education pedagogy takes risks, and adults and young people involved in the projects found this both exciting and challenging. Adults found it very helpful when there was time for collegial discussion and support. The projects demonstrated the success of working and learning together as a cluster group, particularly to learn more about galleries’ contribution to the support of disadvantaged young people. The project contributed to the building of local networks which will be invaluable in the future.

Enabling the participation of young people in the evaluation and programming of galleries and art education, and gaining ownership of the space

Young people, including disadvantaged young people, contributed to the evaluation of these projects, and also gave their views on galleries and gallery education and ways to involve more young people in the arts and art galleries. They were able to make valid and useful comments and recommendations.

Adults and young people were asked about the best methods for routine evaluation by young people, and different methods of evaluation were tested with the young people. Questionnaires, which are useful as an anonymous method of capturing evaluation, were generally not popular with adults or young people and some adults felt they may be ineffective with disadvantaged young people. Gallery educators and young people both preferred other, more creative methods of capturing young people’s experiences and views, such as through photographs and video, recorded on DVD or in a Project Diary, which could be used for reflective evaluation by young people and adults. These were also invaluable for visually demonstrating the work of the projects to others, such as gallery committees, conferences, presentations to young people, or for Arts Award.

Young people in the BFT, KLAC and the SCVA enquire group felt that the best way to get their views heard was through face-to-face conversations with the adults. These projects had time to build relationships between the adults and young people, and the building of trust between adults and young people was vital for generating an open and honest discussion. Where the projects worked best, the young people felt able to say what they felt and offer healthy criticism. Young people at NR5 successfully voiced their opinions in group discussions led by
their tutor, and by completing *envision* questionnaires through art educator led group work.

Overall, adults found that, while it was not always easy, listening and responding to young people led to a more satisfying experience for the young people as well as for the adults. All art educators involved in the projects were committed to the development of a non-hierarchical relationship between adults and young people, but it was found that the relationship worked best when adults supported young people by offering opportunities and choices.

Young people felt a greater sense of ownership of the gallery space because of involvement in the projects: they were now more comfortable in galleries and some even felt at home. The young people who were interviewed for the project were wary of being involved in gallery committees, although some were willing to consider this, but they liked being part of gallery associations, such as Friends. Some of the young people had hoped to exhibit in galleries, and gallery educators recognised the importance of being open and honest with young people about realistic expectations. However, the projects led to a number of innovative developments for including young people’s work in the project galleries and culminated in a two week exhibition of the young people’s work. *en-titled ran* at the SCVA in January 2008 and cluster partners hope that the SCVA might act as a cluster hub for showing young people’s work in the future.

**Encouraging greater participation of young people in the arts and art galleries – young people’s perspectives**

Galleries want young people to participate more in the arts and art galleries. Young people involved in *enquire* East said they enjoyed being involved in the projects and the arts now had a greater place in their lives. However, these young people did not expect other young people to come into galleries of their own volition. It seems that galleries will need to continue to find ways of targeting young people and drawing them into galleries, including through traditional routes such as school visits, as well as through new projects that are more attractive to young people.

The young people involved in *enquire* East were able to evaluate the projects, and interviewees put forward suggestions to attract more young people to galleries. They demonstrated that young people can and must be consulted in order to provide attractive offers for young people.

The young people particularly wanted to learn new creative skills in galleries and to take part in creative activities. They also said they were drawn to more colourful and vibrant exhibitions, wanted interactive exhibitions, and exhibitions of young people’s work. Young people also have art interests based in youth culture which may not be recognised by adults.

The young people said that galleries should work closely with schools, colleges and art teachers to ensure the gallery offers are advertised robustly to young people, but also to give young people the confidence and encouragement to get involved.

Galleries have a number of stakeholders whose interests they must consider. While gallery educators may be keen for young people to have a stronger role in galleries, at present young people’s voice in galleries more generally, including gallery programming, is not strong. This project demonstrated that young people can put forward valuable suggestions for better including young people at these higher levels of participation. Although only a small number of young people were involved in the evaluation of the East cluster projects and galleries, their views demonstrate that young people’s views about art galleries and the arts are invaluable in helping galleries understand and respond to this key potential audience.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview questions for project adults (September 2007)

1. What does the project enable the gallery to do for young people that it wasn’t doing already?

What past experience is the project building on?

What has surprised you during this project?

2. Did the young people evaluate the first phase of the project?

How did the young people evaluate the first phase of the project?

What did the gallery learn from the young people?

How will the gallery enable the young people to evaluate the envision/next phase of the project?

What does the gallery hope to learn from the young people during this phase?

3. In what other ways did/will the project contribute to young people’s learning for empowerment?

4. What difference/changes has the project made to the gallery and its work with young people?

5. How could the learning from the project be extended to empower (a greater number of) young people in the future?

How will/will the project’s initiatives be sustained in the future?

6. What did your gallery hope to gain from membership of the East cluster?

What has your gallery gained from membership of the East cluster?

Could/how could the cluster have been used more successfully?

What is the cluster’s potential for the future?

7. Do you have anything else to add?
Appendix 2
Interview questions for young people (September 2007)

1. The role of art in young people’s lives.
   What art do you do?
   _______________________________________________________
   Are you doing an art exam?
   _______________________________________________________
   Is art a hobby?
   _______________________________________________________
   Had you visited an art gallery before this project?
   _______________________________________________________
   Had you looked at, or used art, in other ways before this project? (e.g. internet, books, public spaces)
   _______________________________________________________

2. Young people’s relation to the art gallery and sense of ownership of the gallery space.
   Why did you get involved in this project?
   _______________________________________________________
   How did you feel about the gallery when you first came?
   _______________________________________________________
   Did it feel comfortable and welcoming or strange?
   _______________________________________________________
   Could you/how could you be made to feel more comfortable/welcome?
   _______________________________________________________

   Were you asked to evaluate the project?
   _______________________________________________________
   Do you feel you are listened to/noticed by the gallery?
   _______________________________________________________
   How have gallery staff responded to your ideas?
   _______________________________________________________
   Have your ideas and/or talents been used by the gallery?
   _______________________________________________________
   Have you been involved in voluntary or paid work in the gallery?
   _______________________________________________________
   Did you want to be?
   _______________________________________________________
   Would you like to be?
   _______________________________________________________
   Have you been involved in gallery exhibitions?
   _______________________________________________________
   Did you want to be?
   _______________________________________________________
   Would you like to be?
   _______________________________________________________
   Would you like to be involved in the gallery’s programming?
   _______________________________________________________
   Would you want to be on a committee deciding what happens in the gallery?
   _______________________________________________________
   Would you like to continue to be involved in the gallery?
   _______________________________________________________
   How would you like to continue to be involved in the gallery?
4. Interrogating learning and personal development in and around the art gallery.
   What have you learnt by being involved in the project and/or by coming to the gallery?

   How has the gallery project and/or the gallery helped you learn?

   Has the gallery helped you to develop skills, including personal skills?

5. Increasing young people’s engagement with art, as producers, viewers and advocates.
   Is art more important to you as a result of being involved in this project?

   Are you doing more art/creative activities as a result of being involved?

   Would you go to art galleries more now?

   Would you encourage others to go to galleries now?

   Would you encourage others to get involved in a project like this?

6. Do you have any other comments?

Appendix 3
NR5’s evaluation of the Fruitful Arts–OUTPOST project

The Coco Crampton (tree, quilt, etc) and Robert Sherratt (cars) exhibitions were quite interesting.

The Giorgio Sadotti (magazines) exhibition was not interesting because it was just magazines stuck around the walls.

The OUTPOST gallery was smaller than expected and cold.

The OUTPOST gallery kitchen and toilet need to be improved (the toilet at the warehouse space wasn’t much better).

The OUTPOST artists should try to make more money for the gallery by making the kind of art that they can sell.

The artwork done at the warehouse with a variety of different materials was good because it was possible to use different tools and it was possible to create something interesting.

The artwork with footballs was boring because it was just about cutting out magazines and sticking them down with glue.

The gallery rules are important but too much time is spent on them.

It would be better if more time was spent on learning skills like spray painting, or doing art that used different tools.

It would be good if young people could learn artists’ skills at the gallery and then teach them to other young people in the future.

More young people should go to galleries and the NR5 young people would encourage their friends to go.

At the gallery and warehouse young people learn to work together.
Appendix 4

enquire East: NR5 at SCVA

1. Do you do any art as a hobby? YES/ NO
2. Had you visited an art gallery before you came to NR5? YES/ NO
3. Did you like the Sainsbury Centre when you visited the first time? YES/ NO
4. Would you like to visit a different art gallery? YES/ NO
5. Would you try to get your friends to go to an art gallery? YES/ NO
6. What do you like best about the Sainsbury Centre? ________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
7. What have you learnt from visiting the Sainsbury Centre? ________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
8. How could the Sainsbury Centre be changed to make it better for young people? ________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
9. Do you have any other comments? _________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________
THANK YOU.

Appendix 5

Ethics statement for enquire East cluster project 2007

One-to-one and group interviews with adults and young people
Recorded interviews will be transcribed.
Transcriptions will be passed to the interviewee in the first instance in order that the interviewee may remove sections of transcripts and amend as appropriate.
Recordings and transcripts, including abridged transcripts, will not be circulated or stored locally.
Abridged transcripts may be sent to engage/enquire nationally at the end of the project (January 2008).

Young people's project evaluations
The researcher will provide young people with summaries of their project evaluations and/or transcripts and will ask them to amend or corroborate these before their views are included in the enquire report.
Young people are under no obligation to take part in the research and are completely free to withdraw at any time and to withdraw their information.
LONDON CLUSTER RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Chisenhale Gallery, Bow Arts Trust and SPACE Studios in collaboration with independent researcher Vivienne Reiss and partner artists and teachers.

Research report by Vivienne Reiss in collaboration with Henrietta Hine, Annabel Johnson, Maggie Nightingale, Mel Dymond (Whitechapel Art Gallery), Annie Bicknell (Bow Arts Trust), Leanne Turvey (Chisenhale Gallery), Tanya Skillen (SPACE Studios).
**Introduction**

In what ways does gallery education contribute to young people's learning?

**Overview**

The *enquire* London cluster included Whitechapel Gallery (lead gallery), Bow Arts Trust, Chisenhale Gallery and SPACE. These organisations worked together as a cluster with the Institute of Education during the first phase of the *enquire* programme (2004-06) (Addison & Burgess 2006). Unlike the first phase of research with the Institute of Education, which involved establishing a new programme independent from the existing gallery education initiatives, this research ran in conjunction with existing initiatives. Hence the research question was deliberately broad to encompass the wide-ranging nature of the institutions and the various programmes.

This research continues to address one of the overarching *enquire* aims to:

Interrogate the learning that takes place through gallery education and to identify effective methodologies through projects with artists working with children and young people.

The specific aims of the *enquire* London cluster research are twofold: firstly, to add to the growing debates around the contribution of gallery education to young people's learning and secondly, to explore current education frameworks and methodologies.

This research programme builds on the thinking behind *Learning in the Gallery: Context, Process, Outcomes* (Pringle 2006). It also references the *Inspiring Learning for All Framework* (ILfA) and the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) and makes use of this conceptual model and supporting toolkits (1). It draws on the *Creative Connections Research and Evaluation Report* (Johnson & Hine 2006) and continues to look at issues around methodology and data gathering. The report concludes with an overview on methodology with observations on future approaches informed by the individual partners within the London cluster.

The research addresses the following questions: What are young people learning? How does the learning develop? And, who maps the learning? Over the course of the programme it has been possible to explore the ways in which learning develops over time, as participants have reflected back on projects previously undertaken. Additionally, the timescale has meant that the programme has also been able to build in creative evaluation strategies and ways of including participant voice.

**Gallery education and learning**

Learning in this context is understood and defined in relation to the frameworks being examined in the research.

In the report *Learning in the Gallery: Context, Process, Outcomes* Pringle outlines three models of learning: instruction, construction and co-construction. She refers to aspects of the co-construction model in relation to contemporary gallery education:

- importance of dialogue
- sharing rather than the transmission of knowledge within a social and supportive environment – the learning community
- co-learning role played by the educator
- emphasis on an experimental and open-ended process of learning

The framework proposed explores the nature of learning and teaching in gallery education wherein context, process and outcomes are mutually dependent. (Appendix 1)

The Campaign for Learning/Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) definition of learning is as follows: learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve the development or deepening of skills, knowledge, understanding, awareness, values, ideas and feelings, or an increase in the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more.
The Generic Learning Outcomes were devised by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at the University of Leicester for the MLA to identify and assess learning outcomes for these sectors. Five generic learning outcomes were proposed, they are as follows:

- knowledge and understanding
- skills
- attitudes and values
- enjoyment, inspiration and creativity
- activity, behaviour and progression

**Learning in, about and through art**

It is important to emphasise that although the overarching research question (in what ways does gallery education contribute to young people's learning?) is broad, it is asked in the context of the art class and the school art curriculum. Additionally the research begins with a number of central questions which are subject-specific and explore young people's attitudes towards art, artists and galleries. Consequently the focus has been on learning *in* and *about* art. However the focus on learning process in the second part of the report, and the final part of the programme, supported a broader enquiry and provided opportunities to explore learning in, about and through art.

**School art**

Previous studies provide comprehensive overviews of the current state of learning and teaching in art, and art and design as a national curriculum subject (Downing & Watson 2004). There are a variety of ambitions for what can be achieved in art education, however in reality these are contextualised by the ethos of specific school departments and more importantly by the curriculum and examining boards. The overriding aim is to teach a body of skills, knowledge and understanding, and these are different from the world of contemporary art production and distribution.

School art is dominated by the prevalence of drawing and painting to the exclusion of other media such as sculpture, design, photography and media arts. The teaching of art skills is the bedrock of the curriculum especially in the early secondary years. Indeed a key objective for one of the cases studies was to address a recent Ofsted report which identified a weakness in the teaching of traditional skills.

As the Institute of Education (IOE) pointed out in the first phase *enquire* report, contrary to the rhetoric of art and design, which is about personal development and self-expression, in reality it is often not until later in secondary education that student autonomy is encouraged. In general, the focus on skills-based and knowledge approaches to teaching is also to the detriment of more conceptual understanding and creativity. The emphasis is on making rather than questioning or thinking.

It could be argued that the approach described above and the related assessment criteria have contributed to an orthodox approach to art education. This potentially 'restricts or at least partly directs what is taught.' For instance, the examining boards’ programmes of study are objective based rather than content specific.

There are other contextual factors that have an impact on learning and teaching in art. A number of studies have also identified issues such as the limitation of time, lack of good quality materials, physical environment, teacher expertise, access to resources and knowledge of a range of artists’ work.

**Context**

The research was conducted in relation to established schools programmes run by the four cluster galleries. The focus of this research was on secondary school initiatives involving artists and contemporary arts practice. At the beginning of the research the artists were working with whole school classes, which in some cases included twenty-six young people. The schools are located in the East London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney, areas with some of the highest deprivation in England.
The galleries are distinct and vary in size, staffing, levels of funding and ethos. As a consequence the projects were unique: they had differing aims and objectives relating to the education policies of the individual institutions. Additionally the artists’ creative and pedagogic approaches have shaped these projects in different ways. The schools, although in the same area of London, are extremely diverse in their approaches to art education. And the programme was working with young people from the ages of thirteen to seventeen, so for some art was a compulsory subject and the students had to take part in art classes until GCSE options are chosen, and for others it was a subject they had selected for A level.

An outline of the individual projects can be found on p51, which are presented as case studies that detail the overarching gallery programme and the project aims and objectives.

**Case studies overview**

The first stage of the research took place between November 2006 and April 2007. The research was continued as an extended programme between June and September 2007.

**Whitechapel Gallery: Creative Connections** artist residency programme with Year 10 students.

**SPACE:** A level and BTEC students from two schools involved in the project with SPACE and Hackney Museum.

**Chisenhale Gallery: development of ways to integrate contemporary art practice into GCSE coursework** with Year 10 students.

**Bow Arts Trust: project with Year 8 students to investigate how gallery education can contribute to the development of skills in Art & Design.**

**Presentation of findings**

It is not the intention of the study to make comparisons across the four different projects which make up the *enquire* programme. Instead the research illustrates the broad-ranging nature of gallery education and explores the different ways gallery education contributes to young people’s learning.

Each section begins with a different question, refers to different learning frameworks and uses different methods.

Part 1, p49, provides an overview of the individual projects and explores the first phase of the research which involved working with data gathered from Post-it activities and questionnaires. The intention was to build on the *Creative Connections Research and Evaluation Report* and to use the GLOs to code, interpret and present the findings. The lead researcher worked with the gallery educators to code and analyse this data. The focus is on learning outcomes within the individual projects and it has involved comparisons between project-specific entry and exit data so the findings have been presented case study by case study.

Part 2, p64, also looks at the first phase of the research but looks at qualitative data gathered from focus groups with the young people. The gallery educators were responsible for gathering the data and conducting the interviews but they were not involved in the analysis and interpretation. The findings have been presented in relation to the *Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework* and explore how the learning develops.

Rather than presenting the findings case study by case study a decision to look across the programmes was made. All the data has been interwoven and together is illustrative of the ways in which gallery education works at different levels across the modes of learning. The presentation is more descriptive and akin to telling a story about how things have happened.

Part 3, p76, explores the second stage of the research and the material has been gathered in teams involving artists and gallery educators working to support young people in a process of participant-generated material. It begins with an outline of the process which in this phase was as important as the outcomes in question. The analysis of the video data was carried out by the gallery educators (one case study involved the artist) in discussion with the lead researcher. Similarly to section 2, the data across the projects has been interwoven and presented in relation to the *Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework*; in this instance it explores what the learning involves. However this is the tip of the iceberg and separate reports and video work exist as further evidence of this phase of the research.
Roles
The research journey has involved a back and forth between the lead researcher and gallery educators as the programme has progressed. Towards the end of the research this also involved some of the artists. Over time the researcher has developed a close working relationship with the gallery educators and the research has developed from a formal approach and a generic way of looking at learning across the four very different programmes, to a more responsive approach and one that uses creative strategies involving young people. The relationships between researcher, gallery educators/artist educators and participants became more blurred as the project progressed, providing a wider ownership of the research process. The role of the researcher latterly was one of ‘critical friend’.

Research ethics
In order to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of participants, no individual or school is named. With agreement, the galleries have been identified. All participants provided voluntary, informed consent to allow the researcher to use statements, spoken or written, as data within the research and for the reproduction of photographic images. Permission was sought from the head teacher of each school to undertake interviews with students. Students were encouraged to express their views freely. The gallery educators have provided comments both factual and interpretational, and these inform this report.

Caveats
The projects span Key Stages 3 and 4 and extend into A level and BTEC. Given the broad spectrum of age ranges, different institutional contexts and pedagogical approaches these findings are context-specific and are not necessarily representative of gallery education programmes per se and therefore do not present a comprehensive overview of this extremely diverse practice. Indeed sometimes the findings across the study conflicted with each other. However, put into context and analysed in relation to other studies, common findings emerge and specific issues arise.

Part 1: What are young people learning?

Overview
This section presents the individual projects as case studies and outlines the findings from the data gathered through the entry and exit activities and questionnaires.

It considers the young people’s changing perceptions of art, artists and galleries, and explores their expectations and the outcomes of the programme. It also looks at generic approaches to measuring learning and ties in data with the GLOs. Finally, it explores the unique contribution of contemporary arts practice and the cultural offer.

Methods
During the first stage of the research the cluster members were keen to develop a shared language and common tools of analysis, and a consistent methodology across the programmes. The original intention was to build on Creative Connections Research and Evaluation Report and to use the GLOs and the ILIA framework to provide a structure and conceptual framework to enable gathering, analysis and interpretation of the data in order to evidence the learning. A representative from the MLA attended a meeting with the researcher and the gallery educators to develop and support this process. A subsequent meeting followed between the MLA officer and lead researcher to refine the methods further.

The research teams comprised the researcher and gallery educators working with the teachers and artists to gather the data. A focus group with teachers was established to inform the four central questions which have been used consistently across the projects.

Exit and entry activities
Each project began by asking the young people to respond to four central questions. The questions were amended from the Creative Connections extension project and were as follows: ‘What is art?’, ‘What do artists do?’, ‘What is a gallery for?’ and ‘What do you think you will get out of this project?’ At the end of the project the fourth question was replaced with the following: ‘What have you got out of this project?’
Part 1: What are young people learning? 
Case studies

An activity working with Post-its or sheets of different coloured paper was designed to gather the data. The baseline activity was conducted before the project began and prior to the young people meeting the artist. At the end of the project the activity was repeated using the same questions, the fourth amended appropriately.

**Questionnaire**
At the end of the project a tick-box questionnaire was circulated to all the young people. A series of questions directly relating to the GLOs were used. These were based on the *Creative Connections* interview sheet. In addition several other questions were asked to ascertain the particular contribution of contemporary art practice to the young people's learning above and beyond the GLOs. There was some debate within the research team as to whether the questionnaire should be written as questions or statements. It was felt that questions were less leading and more age-appropriate.

**Coding and interpretation**
The coding and interpretation of the majority of this data was carried out by the lead researcher working with the individual gallery educators. Much discussion arose during this process. It proved to be a valuable exercise both as an internal process whereby the gallery educators were given an opportunity to reflect and evaluate the projects for themselves, as well as it being a means of compiling outcomes and articulating the impact of the learning to wider audiences. The subjective nature of coding and interpretation must be recognised.

**Exit and entry activities**
The entry and exit activities were conducted in order to map the effect of the projects on young people – the shift in their perceptions of art, artists and galleries. The first three entry questions established where the young people were in terms of their perceptions at the beginning of the project, and to some extent their ‘cultural capital’, and were compared with the exit questions at the end. Comparisons between the two responses show how their perceptions have changed.

As stated above, the intention was to use the GLOs to code all the comments from all the entry and exit activities. A loose coding system was devised wherein the five GLO themes and subcategories were used as descriptors from which to code the statements. For example, in response to the question ‘What do artists do?’ the comment ‘I think artists experiment and make artworks’ could be described by the GLO theme ‘enjoyment, inspiration and creativity’ as the comment reveals that the participant thinks that artists are involved in experimentation and making. However, having spent some time attempting to work with this method, it has not proved possible or even desirable to use the GLOs and subcategories as descriptors for the comments from the first three questions. These questions are not exploring learning outcomes in ways which can be mapped in relation to the GLO categories. Instead alternative coding/Descriptive methods were used and comments have been grouped by comparing statements in response to each of the questions. Key words and phrases were identified and grouped within overarching themes. Where it has been possible the researcher and gallery educators looked at comparing an individual's comments (through handwriting), in order to explore the individual learning journey as well as the overall group response.

However GLO themes have been used as a loose coding and interpretive system to compare comments relating to the exit fourth question: ‘What have you got out of this project?’ While the question does not seek to elicit an answer that directly maps on to the GLO sub headings it is concerned with outcomes. So a comment such as ‘I think I learned to be more cooperative and more creative’ has been classified in relation to the ‘skills’ category ‘social skills’, as it shows that the individual has gained these skills. Coding the responses to this question was much more straightforward and the GLOs were used in the way in which they were intended.

**Questionnaires**
A number of statements included in the questionnaire made direct reference to the five GLOs: knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values, enjoyment, inspiration and creativity and action, behaviour and progression. For example, ‘Have you been aware of other people’s ideas and opinions?” was coded in relation to ‘attitudes and values’. Correlating questions to the five GLOs was fairly straightforward and reference was made to the toolkits on the MLA website which provided useful examples.
Case studies

Case study 1

The school is a mixed comprehensive school in the London Borough of Newham. There are 1,593 students, and over 33% speak English as an additional language. Students' attainments when they join the school are well below average. Approximately 50% of students are eligible for free school meals.

Participating students: Year 10
Total number of students: 13
Teacher: Head of Art

The Ofsted report 2001 shows serious failings in Art & Design provision, with results far below national average. In 2007 the Ofsted report shows dramatic improvement in all subjects, partly due to training and partly due to improved teaching. 'Staff feel that they work in a school where they are encouraged to take risks that will benefit the students.'

Artist: emerging mixed media artist

Dates and location of workshops, numbers of young people

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Project description

Case studies one and two were part of the Creative Connections artist in residence programme. Creative Connections aims to stimulate new approaches to teaching, learning and engaging with contemporary art in secondary schools. It has a focus on developing expertise in the critical and contextual studies aspect of art, and makes space for experimentation and process based work. It aims to facilitate a shift in thinking and practice amongst teachers, engaging them in more critical and discursive pedagogies. Artists and teachers work as partners throughout the projects and are closely supported by the gallery educators. Peer-led training, planning, review and evaluation sessions are an integral part of the programme.

Due to the sexually explicit nature of the work in the Hans Bellmer and Pierre Klossowski exhibition at the Whitechapel the gallery educators partnered with Barbican education to enable students to work with Richard Wilson’s commission for the Curve Gallery as inspiration for the projects.

In his dramatic three-part installation the artist had bored holes into the well-loved icon of British motoring: the London taxi, crushed a burger van and spun a caravan on its axis. In the exhibition Richard Wilson took the familiar and made it spectacular, making reference to Victorian ideas of grand entertainment and public display.

Project aims included the following:

• to introduce and encourage the idea of visiting galleries to view art and to enable students to feel comfortable within this environment

• to provide students with the vocabulary and skills to produce creative dialogue about the artworks they view

• to explore key themes of sculpture, site-specificity, installation, spectacle, architecture, the artist’s body, sound, light and performance as artistic media

• to teach students key skills in digital media including photography, film and audio manipulation

Students explored the following terms: sculpture, site-specific, installation, spectacle, found objects, illusion, the artist’s body, architectural sites and parameters, journeys, artifice, humour, play.

A series of workshops in school were developed to expand students’ ideas on possible tools, materials, concepts and processes used to create art whilst responding to key themes taken from Richard Wilson’s work. The project created links between art, music, dance and technology departments.

Findings from entry and exit activities

What is art?
Initially, over half of the young people made comments about art in relation to techniques, involving traditional media e.g. ‘Sketches; ‘Paint’; ‘Draw’; ‘Pictures’. Towards the end of the project the student’s knowledge and understanding of art included references to expanded forms of representation/media e.g. ‘Art can be drawing painting and journeys’; ‘Art can be anything.’ The entry statements also included comments about art as a medium for feelings and expression, which also mainly used one word answers: ‘Expressions’; ‘Passion’; ‘Emotional’; there were similar but slightly more lengthy comments at the end, they included the following: ‘Expressing opinions and ideas.’

What do artists do?
At the beginning of the project, half the comments described artists in relation to their skills using single words as above. Towards the end, comments were longer and there was more of an emphasis on the artist as creative practitioner and the process of art being a means to express ideas e.g. ‘I think artists think of lots new ideas and they are expressing their feelings into their work.’ One young person commented: ‘Artists draw, research, imagine, motivate, influence.’
What are galleries for?
Initially comments about galleries tended to be based around the presentation of art e.g. 'Displaying art'; 'Storing pictures'; 'Looking at famous paintings'; 'Look at other people's paintings'. Towards the end of the project the comments are more about the type of art shown in galleries and the notion of art and traditional forms of representation shifts to include '3-D drawing, sculpture, anything'.

What do you think you will get out of this project?
What did you get out of this project?
The majority of initial comments related to knowledge and understanding of art and the way artists work: 'Knowing different people's work'; 'Experiences of art and artists'. A couple of young people commented on developing new skills. Approximately a third of the students had low expectations and expressed negative attitudes towards school and the art class. The majority of comments towards the end of the project indicated that the young people had gained substantial knowledge and understanding of art: 'A lot of experience'; 'A new understanding of art'. One young person indicated that they had gained social skills; this person's comment also indicates a shift in creativity: 'I think I learned to be more cooperative and more creative'. The negative attitudes were replaced with more positive comments: 'I have learnt how much fun you can have when you are doing different types of art'.

It is worth noting that there were fewer young people involved in the exit activities, it could be that the responses are from young people who were more engaged in the project.

Case study 2
The school is a mixed, comprehensive in Bethnal Green. There are 905 students, 50% white British heritage, 25% Black British Caribbean or African. There are above average percentage of students eligible for free school meals.

Participating students: Year 10
Total number of students: 17
Teacher: Head of Art

The Ofsted Report 2004 identifies Art & Design provision and teaching as 'Very Good'.
The main strengths and weaknesses are as follows:

- students attain high standards in Years 7 to 9,
- results in GCSE examinations, at the end of Year 11, are well above average,
- the quality of teaching and learning overall, is very good,
- there has been good improvement since the last inspection,
- the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Artist: emerging fine artist
**Dates and location of workshops, numbers of young people**

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**Project description**

This project was also part of the Creative Connections artist in residence programme (see above for description) and was inspired by Richard Wilson’s work at the Barbican. It also involved visiting the artist’s studio.

Project aims included the following:

- to engage with ‘installation’ as a contemporary art medium
- to create installations, sculptures and plans that respond to Wilson’s work in an inventive and creative manner
- to stretch participants’ perceptions on what processes and materials can be used to create artworks
- to emphasise the role of ‘play’ as central to Richard Wilson’s practice (and art making)

Contemporary art terms such as ‘installation’ and ‘intervention’ were discussed. Creative thinking and play was emphasised throughout the project. The idea of process was emphasised and valued alongside finished work. Documentation of process was essential and presentation of work in progress was central and took place throughout the project.

The workshops at school involved students exploring installation art and responding to Richard Wilson’s use of drills and power tools to impact on the taxi in the exhibition and his skill at transforming objects. Students created their own mark-making tools using found materials and filmed themselves in action. In a further workshop responding to Richard Wilson’s revolving caravan, and passage through the taxi, small-scale sculptures that make use of a movable part were created. Unusual combinations of materials and processes were encouraged.

**Findings from entry and exit activities**

**What is art?**

The perceptions of art at the beginning of the project indicated a high level of cultural capital across the group. Young people’s comments range from describing art as conceptual: ‘Art is the mind’ or expressive: ‘Art is how you express the world around you’ or creative: ‘When people create things based on inspiration.’ Students tended to make a personal connection with art: ‘A way of expressing yourself.’ There were limited references at the beginning and end of the project to technique and skills, or the forms in which art takes. There appeared to be little shift in their perception of art from entry to exit comments.
What do artists do?
Over half the comments in the entry activity indicated that the young people connected what artists do to the techniques they use, and these related to traditional media e.g. ‘painting and drawing’. Over the course of the activities the young people’s perception of art changed and towards the end of the project they commented on artists working within an expanded field of practice through making reference to ‘objects, sculpture, moving art and engineering’. There was a similar emphasis on exploring and expressing feelings and ideas in and through art.

What do you think a gallery is for?
The entry comments revealed that the young people had a good knowledge and understanding of the function of a gallery and notion of audience. A couple of comments indicated some knowledge of the art market. These remained unchanged towards the end of the project. Both entry and exit comments described the gallery as place for artists to show work and express feelings and ideas. What is revealed through the exit comments is that a number of young people are surprised about the forms of art displayed in a gallery: ‘I expect to see still drawings at the gallery not moving objects.’ Interestingly, although initially there had been several comments relating to the gallery as a place of learning, inspiration and creativity: ‘A gallery to me is a place where you store creativity where people can come to get inspiration, a place for work to be known’, there were no similar comments at the end of the project.

What do you think you will get out of this project? What did you get out of this project?
Two-thirds of the group had expectations about developing techniques and skills and an understanding of how to draw and why people draw. Several wanted to gain deeper understanding and different views of art. A couple expressed a negative attitude to school. The exit comments show a dramatic shift in the young people’s understanding of art (echoing comments above) as an expanded field of practice: ‘I have learnt that art isn’t just painting or pictures it is anything you create and there are many types of art’; ‘How to make different marks and what installation art is’; ‘To be more abstract and still create great art and make art to create art.’ The comments indicated a positive shift in attitudes towards contemporary arts practice: ‘I have learnt to see art from a different perspective and have a better understanding of art’; ‘I have come to understand about people’s art which may seem like scribbles or rubbish but are really good if you take a good look at it.’ The following comments also highlight this.

Individual learning journey

What do artists do? entry comment
‘Wake up at 11am each morning, spend two hours “thinking” until finally deciding to place a brick by a bunch of flowers, then get paid £10,000 for it by the Cube gallery in Hoxton. Such is the hard life of the artist.’

What do artists do? exit comment
‘Either work hard and make good art or stick two crap things together, get paid £500 for it and then sits around drinking Starbucks and eating organic salad until they get two more objects together for more money.’

What have you got out of the project?
‘I have learnt that not everyone can do simple things like put things together because it’s the person’s style and idea that’s shown in the art.’
Case study 3

The school is a multicultural comprehensive school for girls in Tower Hamlets with 1,415 pupils; 1,147 pupils speak English as an additional language. 65% of pupils are of Bangladeshi origin, 20% of White British heritage and 10% of Black British Caribbean or African. It serves an area of very high economic deprivation and more than 75% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (Ofsted report 2000).

Participating students: Year 8
Number of students: 25
Teacher: Art teacher

Art & Design in 2000 was assessed as particularly strong in a strong school, where children's generally low attainment at intake makes a marked improvement at GCSE and grades are close to the national average. A follow-up inspection in 2006 shows further improvement linked to specialist performing arts status.

Artist: emerging fine artist

Dates and location of workshops, numbers of young people

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Project description

The first sessions involved studio visits to Bow Arts Trust and the Nunnery Gallery. The exhibition included work by contemporary artists who use drawing to develop their ideas and thinking before making a piece of work. Additionally there was an off-site visit to Leopold Hall, a disused community centre which Bow Arts Trust use as a project space. Workshops at the school involved the artist introducing his own work and the work of a range of contemporary artists including; Hetain Patel, John Virtue, Chila Burman, Laylah Ali and Hew Locke. Students explored a range of experimental ways of drawing and discussed and critiqued the work they made. Throughout the project the girls developed their ideas and explored pattern and tradition in contemporary textiles. The artist demonstrated a range of techniques for textile work including the use of wax resist, building up texture and relief using tissue and PVA, and fabric painting using watered down acrylics.
Project aims included the following:

- to inject new skills and creativity to the staff and the students at Key Stage 3 Art
- to develop students' and staff's making and intellectual skills
- to create some high quality creative outcomes for display around the school
- to include projects which promote student voice and citizenship issues
- to include off-site visits to studios and galleries
- to address objectives taken from the school improvement plan and Ofsted inspection recommendations which had identified a weakness in teaching of traditional skills

**Findings from entry and exit activities**

**What is art?**
There was a similar emphasis and percentage of comments describing art in relation to skills involving traditional media, with a focus on technique at the beginning and end of the project. As the project progressed there was a very slight shift away from comments about expression of feelings and more comments at the end were about imagination and seeing: 'Art is your imagination'; 'Art is a means of seeing'; and interestingly: 'Art is a sense of occasion.'

**What do artists do?**
Towards the end of the project there were several comments which made connections between artists, galleries and the art market, demonstrating knowledge in this area: 'Artists create artwork and put them in a gallery so others can see them too'; 'They earn money by selling their artwork.' There was an increase in comments related to skills and techniques; these included comments about thinking and social skills: 'Draw', 'teach people to draw', 'expressing'. These replaced the initial comments about exploring imagination and ideas through art, and references to the notion of the artist as a creative practitioner: 'I think they explore and create different things through inspiration'; 'Artists look at objects and things in life in detail and in a different way and they put it on paper.' A similar proportion of young people made comments that artists express feelings in and through art.

The data gathered from the question: ‘What are galleries for?’ has not been presented, as the gallery was not a significant focus in this project.

**What do you hope to get out of this project? What did you get out of this project?**
The majority of young people expressed interest in deepening understanding and making sense of art and the way artists work: ‘Learn and understand more about art and develop our art skills and ideas'; 'I hope to know what inspires artists to produce such work'; 'I want to look at art in a different way than now.' The expectations for the project were high and several young people indicated that they wanted to progress and succeed in art: 'I think I'm gonna learn a lot and I want to be a good artist.'

The exit comments indicated that many of the young people had gained new knowledge and deepened their understanding about art and artists. And several young people commented on gaining social skills: ‘During this project I learnt new ways of doing and knowing how to make different types of art and I learnt how to work in a group.’ A couple of young people however commented that they had learnt nothing.

It is worth noting that conditions under which the exit data was collected may have had a negative influence on the comments from the young people. Data gathered through the focus group (see part 2, p64).
Case study 4

School 1: A Roman Catholic, voluntary aided mixed comprehensive school in Hackney with 988 students. 38% of the students have English as an additional language. Roughly 75% are of Black British Caribbean/African heritage. 35% of students are eligible for free school meals. It is classed as a good school with a satisfactory sixth form. It has performing arts specialist status.

School/college 2: A girls’ school in Hackney with 825 students. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The school serves a diverse local community and promotes an inclusive learning environment. Nearly 60% of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The school received awards for high added value in 2005-06 from the Specialist School Trust and was identified as one of the most improved schools for examination achievement in 2005 and 2006.

Number of students: 13 mixed group BTEC/A level
Teacher 1: Head of Art
Teacher 2: Head of Art
School 1: Art & Design not mentioned in Ofsted reports.
School 2: Standards are below average, but improving in Year 12 due to better preparation in GCSE. Teaching is good. However, most teaching does not have a high enough emphasis on empowering the students to work independently and be fully involved in their own learning. (Ofsted 2001/2006)

Artist: established mid-career mixed media artist

Project description
SPACE partnered with Hackney Museum to host a five-week residency for an artist to create a new work in response to the museum’s upcoming exhibition – Abolition 07. As part of the residency the artist worked with students from Hackney schools.

The artist’s work explores the complexities of the modern world and the impact that the slave trade had on the general wealth and development of this country. He had previously worked on education initiatives, however it was the first time that he had worked on a project incorporating young people’s work into a commissioned exhibition installation. The students had little previous experience of working with an artist in a professional art studio environment. And it was also the first time the Hackney Museum had worked with an arts organisation and a contemporary artist.

The project included visits to the National Portrait Gallery to look at portraits of all the major players from the history of England: politicians, architects, writers and poets. The artist also presented his own work – paintings, collages and photography. He told of his fascination with the 17th and 18th century and relocating a black presence at this time, which is a force behind much of his work. Over the five weeks the students worked in a studio at SPACE. They began with simple drawing exercises and then they drew each other, eventually moving on to drawing themselves. Each student worked on a final piece: a painting of themselves on 18 x 24 inch canvases exploring self-expression, identity and identification through new technical and artistic devices.

Dates and location of workshops, numbers of young people

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The finished portraits were framed in elaborate gilt frames and hung in a similar way to those seen in the National Portrait Gallery. They became part of the artist’s installation *Financial Times* at the Hackney Museum. They were presented on a wall facing the artist’s own paintings on paper, juxtaposing themselves through the self-portraits on his work. The work was part of a larger exhibition at the Hackney Museum, which explores the history and legacy of slavery with specific reference to Hackney and its people.

A level group criteria – Silver Award:

Unit 1: arts practice
- arts challenge
- going to arts events
- finding out about artists and art organisations

Unit 2: arts leadership
- share skills with others to plan and deliver an arts project

BTEC group criteria – Painting Unit:
- using various types of paint techniques
- researching various images
- planning a painting
- studying portraits and using collage techniques to create an artwork

Findings from entry and exit activities

What is art?
The majority of comments at the beginning relate to art as an expressive medium: ‘Something to express your mood in drawing.’ A couple of comments relate to more conceptual modes, ‘Art is a form of expression, creativity, an opportunity to explore mind and representation in all aspects.’ Towards the end of the project comments include expression in terms of mood and feelings and also ideas: ‘A form of expression of emotions and thought, questions and facts, statements, opinions.’ There are also several comments latterly about exploration: ‘Art is all about expression, experimenting with new things, being FREE and passionate about making a piece of artwork.’

The following individuals’ comments illustrate the above:
individual A entry comment: ‘Something to express your mood in drawing.’
individual A exit comment: ‘Art is something you can express yourself with. Art is something you can play around with and expand your inspiration and understand more about your hidden talents.’

What do artists do?
At the beginning and end of the project there is little difference in the number of comments about artists expressing feelings and ideas, although towards the end of the project this becomes slightly more embedded in the creative process. ‘Artists express feelings etc through their work, visual language.’ Towards the end of the project the comments shift towards the notion of the artist as socially engaged practitioner: ‘Exploring different methods/materials and inspiring others and letting others see their individual talents’; ‘Artists express their experience, emotions, and much more through art to share with audience.’ One young person made the following comment: ‘I think artists answer questions that we [the public] are sometimes too scared to confront or answer.’
**What do you think a gallery is for?**
Initially most of the comments are about presenting art, there were two references to the gallery as a public place and a place for inspiration. All the young people towards the end of the project made comments relating to the gallery as a public institution, one that has a social/educational function as well as a place of inspiration: 'A gallery is somewhere to go see work, somewhere to sit and look at people's work and appreciate other people's work, also it is a place to get inspiration of making my own work'; 'A gallery is a place where artwork can be exhibited, it's a place you should feel free to go to, to relax and sometimes find answers to questions you're not too sure about, because that's what art's about, it's a sense of meaning and could also reflect your feeling on a certain matter.'

**What do you hope to get out of this project? What did you get out of this project?**
The young people were a motivated group of older students. Their knowledge and understanding of art increased and they applied this in a meaningful way: 'I've gained the experience of working in a studio, learning about portraiture, to look deeper into colour.' Several comments indicated that they had developed skills in learning and understood the impact of conditions for learning. 'I have realised the importance of having the right environment to work in.' There was an increase in their self-confidence and the final comment expressed a positive attitude to the project: 'I think I've gained a lot out of this experience, I've developed my drawing skills a lot, been a bit more dependent on myself and learnt to connect with people in the art world that I wouldn't have been able to under normal circumstances. All in all I think this project was great!!'

The above findings relate to the A level group as data from BTEC group was incomplete.

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**Case study 5**
A mixed, comprehensive community school with 1,337 children in Newham. 51% are eligible for free school meals. 75% speak English as an additional language and the school has an above average proportion of students with special educational needs at 5%. 62% of students are of South Asian heritage. 19% of students are Black British Caribbean or African and 8% are White British. The school has Sports Mark Gold and Artsmark Gold status and it won a School Achievement Award in 2003.

**Participating students:** Years 10 and 11
**Total number of students:** 26
**Teacher:** Head of Art

**Main strengths and weaknesses:**
- standards are below average
- good teaching promotes effective learning
- teachers have high expectations which help students achieve well
- students have very positive attitudes and behaviour is good
- too little use is made of ICT to develop learning

Their work is influenced by a variety of famous artists and a range of cultural styles but this is not strongly evident in their finished pieces. Ofsted 2004.

**Artist:** emerging fine artist

**Project description**
The project *Interventions* was a series of artist-led interventions into a GCSE coursework project 'surfaces'. The Interventions sought to explore and reveal ways in which gallery education can be most useful to GCSE art staff and students. In conversation with the teacher, three areas were identified for the project to focus on: sketchbooks, observational drawing and interpretation of artwork. The project introduced new models in response to these areas, whilst continuing to draw on a series of models for
facilitating individual learning and supporting critical thinking in GCSE art. These were devised and tested during the previous phase 1 project. Chisenhale Gallery’s phase 2 set out to explore:

- the sketchbook as a tool for developing ideas
- drawing as a way of thinking
- engaging with artists’ work in the classroom

The content of the workshops covered observational drawing, sketchbooks and working with artists (exhibition, practising artists and artist reference). Team planning sessions involved the artist, gallery educator, teacher, volunteer artist (and visiting artist).

Workshop 1: Sketchbooks

One of the aims of the workshop was to give participants the opportunity to work with an artist for whom a sketchbook was a meaningful and integral part of their practice. A visiting artist was invited to participate in planning and running the session and share his work with participants through activities and a presentation.

Workshop 2: Gallery visit – Still Life and Responsible Tourism by Grace Ndiritu

Students created a backdrop/panorama representing escapism in the gallery’s education studio. The workshop also involved smaller groups visiting the exhibition and using the models developed previously to interrogate the exhibition. At the end of their visit each student documented elements of the ‘escapist space’ through drawing and writing on a postcard that was sent to their school as a prompt for the next workshop.

Final workshops: Artist reference/artwork interpretation

The final workshops used postcards as the basis for an engagement with artists’ work. Following a period of prolonged looking at and questioning a single piece of work, participants shared their responses, which were challenged through conversation and the introduction of art historical context and the development of their own work in response to issues raised.

Findings from entry and exit activities

This project was structured and informed by a research process and the gallery educator questioned the idea that an external research process is more valid than that constructed and delivered through the coordinating gallery. Instead of working through a process of coding and interpreting the comments from Post-it activities, the gallery educator requested a more informal reflection on the research to date. This resulted in a discussion between the gallery educator and lead researcher which was not documented for use in this report.

### Dates and location of workshops, numbers of young people

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Overarching observations on findings from entry and exit activities
The comments gathered through exit and entry activities are context-specific and amongst other things relate to individuals’ prior knowledge and experiences, the nature of the group and approach of the artist. Hence it is not possible to make an overarching analysis. However it is worth noting that many of the comments demonstrate new knowledge and deepened understanding of art, artists and galleries. There is a demonstrable shift in the decrease in number of comments relating to techniques involving traditional media. And the perception of art as a means of expression in some instances has developed to include ideas and meaning making. What is significant is the change in young people’s concept of art and the recognition of art as an expanded field of practice. Also the study reveals that many of the young people have developed positive attitudes towards contemporary practice.

Questionnaires
The following data represents the response to questions from the questionnaire and is presented in relation to the GLOs.

The project has resulted in an increase in the young people’s ‘knowledge and understanding’ with a high proportion of young people stating that they had learnt new things working with an artist. Over two-thirds of the young people thought that they had gained new ‘skills’. The majority of young people reported that the project had made them aware of other people’s ideas and opinions, illustrating a positive experience and change in ‘attitudes and values’. There were high levels of ‘enjoyment, inspiration and creativity’ throughout the project and most of the young people thought that they had been able to express their ideas. Working with artists and visiting a gallery has had an impact in relation to young people’s ‘action, behaviour and progression’ with over two-thirds intending to visit a gallery again.
There was a consistency of increased learning across the projects and the data highlights the cultural offer from galleries and the contribution of contemporary art practice to young people's learning above and beyond the previous learning outcomes. Over three-quarters of the young people commented that the activity had been different to the normal activities in school. The majority of young people thought that visiting a gallery or artist's studio made schoolwork more interesting. A high proportion of the young people stated that they would like to work with an artist again. Approximately two-thirds of the young people had told other people about the project and just over two-thirds thought there were transferable skills and that they could use the things they had learnt in other situations.

Part 2: How does the learning develop?

Overview
The following section outlines the findings from the focus groups. It builds on the data gathered from the Post-it activities outlined in the section and begins with a section which explores the young people's changing perceptions of art. It also highlights some of the limitations of school art, concuring with findings from previous research referenced in the introduction.

The main focus of this part of the report explores the themes set out in the Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework and looks at how the young people were involved in learning. It illustrates the different approach to learning, embodied in contemporary arts practice.

The chapter concludes by addressing the context, particularly looking at site-specificity and the role of the artist. It explores the learning environment and the nature of the artist's creative and pedagogical approaches, both of which are fundamental to gallery education.

Methods
A series of focus groups were set up at each school towards the end of the projects. The questions included the four central questions and also a number of questions exploring the process of learning. These questions were based around the four categories outlined in Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework:

- collaborating
- experimenting
- analysing/questioning
- engaging holistically

In addition there were also questions around the role of the artist, the gallery/artist's studio as a site for learning, and the wider impact of the project. (Appendix 2).

The focus groups were facilitated by each of the gallery educators, sometimes with the teacher present, and involved three young people. This process echoes the approach proposed in the Kent Creative Partnerships evaluation strategy devised by Anna Cutler, where only adults already known to the young people are involved in the interviewing process. The lead researcher was present at the focus groups as an observer.
After much discussion over the problematic nature of selection
and labelling, it was agreed to select three individuals based on
the criteria introduced by the Institute of Education in the first
phase: good at art, resistant and 'wild card'. The young people
were unaware of the selection criteria. The selection was made
through discussion between the gallery educator, artist and
teacher. The aim was to establish mixed ability focus groups.
It has been outside the resources of this research to identify
individual comments in relation to the selection criteria.

The research team felt strongly that a research project which
was looking at learning in, about and through art necessitated
the inclusion of artwork. It was agreed that although analysis of
the artwork would not be a focus of the research, each of the
focus groups would begin with a discussion around the
student's artwork.

**Perceptions of art**
The notion of school art moving between skills/technique and
expression has been acknowledged. In some cases where there
had previously been an emphasis towards a technique based
approach to teaching art, this had resulted in little student
autonomy and self-expression, as is demonstrated in the
following statement:

Has your idea of art changed during the project?

'I think it's changed completely, right, especially to me
because I never knew that art was actually expressing your
ideas or anything. So yeah it has.'

**Case study 2**
The following comment echoes the above and makes reference
to the dominant practice of observational drawing. The student
expresses the desire to be more creative.

And how does this work compare to previous work you've
made in art lessons?

'This is a lot better than the stuff I've made in previous art
lessons because stuff in previous art lessons we just draw.
We've never actually made our creative side. We just usually
draw a still life object and stuff, but with this you can actually
be creative and make your own thing instead of like drawing
something someone else has made.'

**Case study 2**

Again the study supports other research highlighting the limited
range of media that young people have access to. The following
young people went on to express the view of many, which is that
art is boring. The second comment related this directly to the
media on offer.

'I'm a bit more open-minded when it comes to art now. If I
was told to do something, then I wouldn't go, "Ah, that's
boring." I'd explore it and then I'd go, "ah, that's boring" if I
don't like it.'

'Yeah, it's changed my opinion of art. Because now I know
that it's not all about painting and drawing. It's about a lot
more things.'

**Case study 5**

Other students continued:

What was the main thing you got out of it?

'That art's not just drawing and painting and stuff.'

'A new understanding of art as well.'

'Thinking differently about art and what it can be.'

**Case study 1**

Not all the young people made comments about their perception
of art having changed greatly. Older students, particularly those
studying art A level, had a broader understanding of art.

'It's not changed my ideas, it's added to my whole
experience and passion about art. Within art you have the
freedom to create and do anything you want to do.'

**Case study 4**

However even the older students commented on the limited
range of media and materials they were able to work with. This is
illustrated in the following commentary about painting.

'We only paint final pieces.'

'Most of the time you don't have enough time to paint.'

'We never get to paint.'

'Yeah cos most times it's just powder paint.'
Do you want proper materials?

‘Yes.’

‘It takes so long to like to mix one colour.’

‘If you get a water splash on it, like you leave it to dry somebody splashes water on it the whole thing is just ruined.’

Case study 3

‘In our school we have done self-portraits, but this time it’s different because whereas before we just did a wash and painted on top of it, we’ve had to build up the paint with like more than one layer and stuff like that. And it’s taught me how to use paint in a different way.’

Case study 4

Some of the students involved in GCSEs also commented on the perceived limitations of the curriculum. They described a very different way of working to that of an artist. The following discussion about the use of the sketchbook highlights this difference. It also shows the students’ understanding of the limitations of an approach based on technique which results in little more than copying and pastiche, and the lack of real engagement in ideas.

‘They [artists] keep their sketchbook in their bag and they draw.’

Does that feel different to this kind of sketchbook?

‘Yeah.’

How?

‘Cos we just use it in class and we work in class. They go all around.’

‘And this book like if there’s a … we can’t like to do everything that we see. It has to be in the subject really.’

[It] has to link to your project?

‘Yeah, so like this is kind of restricting and if you have a little sketchbook with you it’s more free because you can draw whatever you want and it doesn’t have to link with anything.’

‘I think in GCSE work it’s not most of your ideas, it’s mostly your artists’ ideas, but we have to just try to change it.’

This is the artist that you chose to reference?

‘Yeah and you just have to change them a bit so it doesn’t look the same.’

Case study 3

The more discursive and experimental approach of gallery education may at times seem at odds with the dominant perception of the requirements from examining boards. Young people used to more practical ‘doing’ activities and a particular way of working to achieve good grades, were initially concerned that these projects were going to cause irrelevant and unnecessary additional work. However as the following comment illustrates, the students began to see the synergies between the projects and their school artwork:

‘First I thought like cos you lot are coming it’s going to stop us doing our GCSE work and after you stayed then I realised how you helped us more. But in the beginning I just thought like you’re just wasting time. Because I was so into getting a good mark GCSE and now I realise you get more help and everything and you can know what you need to get a good grade.’

Case study 3

Findings

The following section uses the Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework to look at how the young people were involved in learning. In this instance the research focused on the process of learning and comments have been grouped under the four categories identified previously. The categories or headings are overlapping, representing the interrelated nature of learning. They provide a loose framework to structure and interpret the data from the focus groups. Given the different learning scenarios some aspects of the framework are more or less prominent than others.
Collaboration (by valuing individual responses within a group, sharing learning and dialogue)

Collaborative modes of learning were evident across the projects. The majority of students commented that working in this way was different from their normal activities.

Most of the projects set out to develop the students' learning by establishing a social and supportive environment. Discussion and dialogue were central to this approach and students were encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge. The young people indicated that they valued the notion of a 'learning community' and their perception was that there were a number of positive outcomes from working as a group.

And how did the activities make you feel?

'Part of the group.'

'It did make you feel part of the group. You weren't as left out as you would be in a classroom.'

Did you talk to each other more?

'Yeah, it was better with a group.'

'Because there was more group activities.'

'And group discussions.'

'Usually it's like individuality.'

'You've got to compile it. Like each person had a really good idea and you put them together.'

'And you come up with really good things and a really good piece of artwork.'

Case study 5

The teamwork and cooperation evident in the statement above in some cases led to exchanging ideas and new insights. It also involved understanding different perspectives.

Do you think you worked well as a group?

'Yeah.'

'I think we did because working individually didn't bring out your best.'

'Whereas working in a group you can get different ideas from different people's perspective.'

'You look at this, you look at that, you're like oh yeah I can do this, I can do that.'

'Yeah and you swap ideas, you exchange.'

Case study 2

The following conversation is indicative of the way these projects enabled greater student participation, resulting in them taking responsibility for their part in the process.

Because usually what sort of thing would you do?

'Go along with one idea.'

'Yeah.'

'Because no one will be really concentrating.'

'So like if one person's concentrating and one person's saying their idea, everyone would just nod their head and agree and just go along with that idea.'

'Usually it's like one person just does most of the work and you just talk to the people in the group and tell them what to do.'

'But now everyone had a bit to do and you have to do that bit.'

Case study 5

Collaborative activities were central to most of the projects and in some cases the final work resulted in a collaborative artwork.

'It belongs to the group the piece of art, cos yeah everybody took part in it, so it's sort of a joint effort.'

Case study 1

However there is pressure, particularly on older students, to produce individual pieces for assessment purposes. Also there is a certain amount of competition and intellectual copyright which is demonstrated in this statement by one of the students.
‘When you have a really good idea you don’t want to share it with someone else, cos like it’s like your piece and whatever we do it’s just the same and you go to the art examiners and they might think like we’re just copying each other.’

Case study 3

One of the projects did not set out to engage the students in collaborative activities or indeed collaborative modes of learning; the project involved working on individual self-portraits.

‘... with this project it’s not really about communicating with anyone else, it’s about communicating with yourself and understanding yourself a bit better.’

There was criticism about the overall approach to the project and even though the students recognised they were working on individual artworks, they expressed the desire to have had the opportunity to discuss ideas more than they had when at school.

‘I think if I was going to change it I would make it like – do our portraits but also kind of bring the group together to make them communicate and interact more.’

‘I was kind of let down by it because there was less interaction than I thought there would be.’

However some of the students described a process whereby they had critiqued each other’s work and drew upon each other’s ideas as resources.

‘I think we were advising each other how to make the portrait better. Like we’re walking around and looking at each other’s portraits and if someone asked you what do you think about, you just tell them what to improve on, you know. I think that works you know, another person’s opinion and who is your peer as well, but yeah.’

‘And I think why it works is because you can sit in front of a mirror for a long time and look at yourself and you think yeah I’ve captured myself, but a fresh pair of eyes can see what you’re missing.’ Case study 4

Across the age range and different projects the students were enthusiastic about working collaboratively as the following comment illustrates.

‘The most interesting part of the project was the journey one because we had to – well we had to really work as a group more than any other time really.’

Case study 1

They recognised that their ideas developed in discussion with their peers and as the following comment illustrates, there is acknowledgement of the dialogue and co-learning between the students and artist.

How did it make you feel when you knew the artist was coming in?

‘Just thought it would be another teacher really. Just telling us to do something and we’ll do it but it wasn’t like that. She was telling us stuff but we were telling her stuff too. And it wasn’t just like a one-way learning thing.’

Case study 1

In all these projects the impact of having additional art/education professionals involved in the project was huge.

Was it different working with the artist and me ... in the way you worked as a group, or did it feel pretty much how you normally work?

‘I think it’s better when there’s more teachers, cos when we used to have just Miss X [teacher] and there’s only one teacher and she’s busy with someone else, by the time she comes to another person it’s time to go. And when it’s a lot of different teachers you can ask them their opinions.’

Case study 3

**Experimenting (by engaging, revealing, risk-taking, maintaining open-endedness)**

All the young people interviewed talked about experimenting with different materials and developing new ideas. However within the current education climate the emphasis on standards and assessment is foremost, and so doing things in new ways and taking risks is not always encouraged. Risk was an alien concept to nearly half the young people interviewed, many of whom asked: ‘What do you mean by taking risks?’
The following conversation highlights issues both to do with unfamiliarity of the term and also in relation to the students' experience of working in this way. The teacher states clearly that this has also been a different way of working for her. In this context the young people again comment on the constraints of working with traditional materials and express a positive feeling when they are able to work more creatively.

Have you done things in new ways, taken risks more do you think?
'I'm not really sure what the question is stating.'

Have you experimented? Done something different. You've never done anything like this before ...
'I've [teacher] never taught a lesson like this before, so it's completely different.
'Never done something like this before.'

'Very, very different.'
'And I like it though as well.'

'Yeah, cos it gets your creative side more creative.'

'Instead of drawing you can actually use different ...'

'Like instead of being cramped up you know ...'

Case study 2

This group of young people also equate the notion of taking risks with the idea of danger. They discussed using materials that will stain and working with sharp objects which might hurt them or being burnt by hot glue.

Can you give an example of a risk that you've taken that you maybe wouldn't have done?

'Do you mean a risk while making it?'

Yeah, any of the sessions that you maybe thought I can't do that and then oh no I'm going to do it anyway.

'With the painting, the acrylic stains.'

'That's it, yeah, that's one of them.'

'And also some of the objects were sharp like for starters the wire was and if some people used the wire, like as in today's lesson we had to make like a mobile or something, something that moves and people use like the wires and stuff they hurt.'

'And the hot glue as well. That's some dangerous stuff.'

'As you said before like yeah I wanted to do because I looked at the hot glue, I said oh I'd better call M [the artist] to help me to do this, but then because the time was going I was like I'm just going to do it and I did it.'

Case study 2

Clearly managing risk and appropriate adult supervision is essential when using unfamiliar materials and equipment. But creating the environment to support young people to work more independently, one in which they are instructed less and find out more for themselves has advantages.

Trying out new things and making mistakes is all part of a learning process. This way of working is sometimes scary, not just in terms of physical safety as above, as it takes students out of their comfort zones. The following student talks about an idea which she developed and tried to incorporate, in her view unsuccessfully, into her artwork. She was able to re-work her piece and was pleased with the final result.

Have you worked in new ways or taken any risks?

'Yeah I've taken risks.'

What sort of risks have you taken?

'The big blob.'

When you first did it, though, what did it feel like?

'I thought that I did a really big mistake.'

So would you take another risk next time?

'No.'

I bet you would! [researcher]

All laugh

'She most definitely would!'

Case study 5
Part 2: How does the learning develop?

enquire: inspiring learning in galleries 02
Research reports

Generally, the young people enjoyed experimenting with materials and working with different media. The following conversation relates to a project where the students were working on a new media project incorporating sound.

Have you experimented and worked in new ways?

‘Yeah. In the music one I experimented with different sounds.’

And how do you feel about that?

‘Yeah, it worked out pretty well in the end.’

OK, so it was worth taking the risk?

‘Yeah.’

Case study 1

The following student describes experimenting not just with materials but also with new ideas and subject matter; she talks about a very personal approach to her work.

Have you taken any risks with these portraits?

‘I think the whole project is taking a risk.’

In what way?

‘Because we’ve never done this before.’

Is it that you haven’t done a self-portrait or is that you haven’t used paint like that?

‘It’s both because a) I haven’t used paint like that before and b) I’ve never done a self-portrait before, so was trying to mix the two together to create something good.’

‘And you’re trying to be quite precious with it because it’s your work and it’s you who you’re painting.’

Case study 4

Experimenting with new materials and experiencing a broader range of ideas and artwork has the potential of enabling the students to think more laterally or ‘outside the box’. One student made the following observation:

Do you think you’ve experimented differently?

‘Yeah.’

In what way?

‘Well you think in different ways after you’ve seen stuff different than what you expected and stuff like that and we did a lot that we wouldn’t have really done.’

Case study 1

In some cases the young people became aware that the experimental nature and open-endedness of contemporary art practice meant that there were not necessarily any right or wrong answers. The following comment suggests a link between opportunities to experiment and increased self-confidence.

In this project with E [the artist] do you think you’ve done anything in a new way or have you taken any risks?

‘Yeah, all these questions … I thought like I might be wrong and all that. But you said you can’t be wrong because it’s your own opinion. That’s a different thing that we learnt in art.’

Another student in the same group continued:

‘Yeah, when I made this. Usually if you do this in the art lesson or anywhere else you’ll get in trouble.’

‘I was thinking of being disruptive in this lesson by making them, then I had a good idea.’

So you were allowed to be a bit playful I suppose and then you made some work?

‘Yeah.’

Case study 3

For students who may already think quite laterally and are consequently sometimes regarded as disruptive, the project provided a place to manage this and turn potentially disruptive behaviour into creative activity with positive outcomes.

Analysing and reflecting (by questioning, contextualising and reconsidering)

There is evidence to suggest that the majority of students have reappraised their attitudes towards contemporary art (see part 2, p64). They have also been introduced to new ways of thinking about their own artwork. Previous sections indicate that
students have been involved in a process involving dialogue and experimenting which has contributed to ongoing analysis and reflection throughout the projects.

The nature of the production of artwork and creative practice can be seen as a process of experimentation and reflection. This is represented to some extent by the lengthy analysis individuals in the focus groups provide in relation to their individual artworks, explored further below. Students were simultaneously engaged with manipulation of materials and processes as well as ideas, concepts and critical appraisal. One student commented:

‘I’m pleased with all of it really. Today was kind of frustrating because I tried to add to it, but I kind of made it worse. I wish I’d never touched it at all. But it’s just teaching you a lesson really that just how to build up a painting right … you had to really add layers of paint in different colours, so it’s made me understand like my face isn’t just one colour. It’s like different tones all over it. But … I like it.’

Case study 4

The following observation builds on a comment from the previous section where the student points out a disjuncture between GCSE coursework and the project. In the previous example she expressed frustration with simply copying a technique and a lack of real engagement with ideas. In the following quote she talked about finding links between two seemingly different ways of working. She described the broadening of reference points as well as refining ideas:

‘So it was like a different way of thinking, like she [artist] made you think about a wider variety of things … and then if you think like that then you can link these two things that seem so different. But she made you come up with ways of like – a different way of thinking about it, different things so you can incorporate almost anything into your artwork, rather than before we were just thinking about one thing like you could do with all of your work.’

Case study 3

In all the projects the students looked at and explored the work of a range of artists, this introduced them to new ways of working and new ideas. The following comment demonstrates how art can become a way in to exploring wider socio-cultural issues. It can also be a way of thinking through ideas and the significance of a particular subject can resonate with individual students leading to an increased sense of self.

‘About this project I think it’s really cool the way they’ve linked slavery to something that we can relate to nowadays. Like when you’ve got a passion for something you want to find out more about it and if you’ve got a passion for art and someone throws a topic at you like slavery, there are so many ways you can look at it and I thought it was really good the way they linked the two together. Because not only did it give us a chance to learn something, we got to really look at ourselves.’

Case study 4

As has been noted in the previous section (collaborating) the students described a process whereby they analysed and evaluated each other’s work and ideas. The process of interpretation involves this same type of critique, a process of questioning and focused looking. The following comment illustrates how students have reflected on the way in which the artist is conveying meaning through their work.

A gallery's more for – not just about looking, it affects your feelings?

‘Yeah. And how you would describe artwork.’

‘To make people who come to see it to feel what you’re feeling. You’re doing that to them, your painting or whatever.’

‘And if the person doesn’t understand it, then you have to look and look again, keep on looking before they can understand and see what it’s about. Because if you just look once and start judging before you actually really look at it properly, you have a good look at it and see exactly what they’re trying to put across, the message that they were trying to put across, then you won’t understand it you see.’

‘Yeah. That they try to communicate through their art to make other people to feel the way they have felt …’

Case study 2
Engaging holistically (by responding on emotional and physical as well as cognitive levels)
The modes of learning outlined above which involved collaborating and experimenting, have in many cases resulted in students making more personal connections with the projects, and this in turn has led to a high level of engagement. There were varying degrees of motivation levels across and within the groups, and in some instances the teachers expressed surprise at the responses and achievements of individual students who were 'under-achieving' at that time.

As has been noted the projects created the environment to support young people to work more independently, one in which they were instructed less, resulting in a sense of student ownership of the learning process. In this instance the students have been allowed to determine the themes of the work which has led to a deeper engagement with the process.

How does it compare to previous work?

'In art we get told what to do, we get given ideas and then we develop on ideas. With this it's anything that you want, so it's like ... all me. We didn't get told what to do, we done it from what we want to do.'

'Cos usually you get told to do a theme, but in this project we chose our own themes and it came from our own minds. That was good.'

Case study 3

The students felt simultaneously excited and also challenged by the projects. This was empowering and led to increased enthusiasm for creating and completing their work.

How does it make you feel when you're working this way?

'Makes me feel good about myself, yeah. I'm actually making something that I've never made before, a new experience.'

'I think the eagerness kind of covers it up when you're doing it. Kind of a little bit of the fear sparks up but then it just goes back down cos like you have to finish it, like have to do it, so then that's it.'

'Yeah, it's basically what X said. If you start something you've obviously got to finish it, you get eager to finish it, you enjoy it more and you just want to get down to it and finish it.'

Yeah, that's why practically no one had any incomplete work. Everyone completed.'

Case study 2

The following comment from other students also demonstrates that feeling involved can lead to greater commitment and encourage participants to embark on further work.

'Does it make you feel more involved?

'Now I do more work at home. Because I want to do it as well, I feel I've kind of enjoyed doing it as well.'

'Inspired.'

'In class I don't do that much work ... here I worked hard on the idea.'

Case study 3

Most of the students had talked about the project to peers and family. Many had also taken work home and in some instances the project had led to them working on new ideas and art projects away from school.

'Like when I got home after our art lesson I saw a few boxes that was for the recycled stuff and I'm honest, I took some of them and I cut them up and made a robot with it for my little brother.'

'Yeah, when I come home from the art lessons I've just had so much experience and stuff I just want to carry on, so I find loads of different things, like loads of different little objects in my house and I just put my mind to it.'

Case study 2

The following student talked about a deep sense of connection with the project and a real engagement with the subject:

'At first I didn't really understand how abolition had anything to do with us, like doing the paintings, but then thinking about why we had that trip to the gallery, it kind of tied things together. And also the way he [the artist] started the session as well, when he was like OK, how much do you think I weigh? How much do you think I'll be worth in the slavery time? ... I never actually ever thought of myself like how much
I would be worth in the slavery times. And I think for me that’s when the project really started, because we got to feeling and understanding of why we was here.’

Case study 4

This self-awareness developed into self-confidence and a sense of worth. Another student in the same group continued:

And when you went to the exhibition and [the artist] was talking about slavery, has that made you think about painting differently and how your self-portrait would look? Is there a connection?

‘The importance of yourself. How you perceive yourself and you know if you’re painting a portrait of yourself it is really important. I mean it’s being important to someone as well and it’s going to stay for a while.’

‘Yeah, if it’s going to last then the future is going to find out about us, you know, and I think that we’re important.’

Case study 4

A number of the projects involved the young people in more physical activity, working on larger-scales or in different kinds of spaces. It involved students being active or moving around in ways not necessarily equated to working in the art room. The following conversation illustrates this.

And was this activity different from your normal activities in school?
‘Yeah.’
In what way?
‘Cos you’re travelling and not just doing one piece, doing one thing.’

‘Oh yeah, cos like in normal class lessons and then these lessons really except PE we’re sitting down doing work most of the time, but this project we’re doing like running around.’

‘It’s different cos we were moving about and stuff and trying out new things.’
‘It’s a different way of making something.’

Case study 1

On emotional as well as physical levels the students were immersed in projects and became more responsive to creative impulses.

‘When like you pick something up [materials] just ideas start flowing from everything into your head and then you’re like oh I can make this, I can make that.’

‘It gives you a chance to explore your imagination and really let yourself loose to create what you want according to the materials and your imagination and it just lets you express yourself through your art.’

‘Just make your imagination run wild.’

Case study 2

Environment

The students commented on the different environments they were working in. The projects all involved gallery visits and some were engaged in activities in those galleries. In one of the projects the workshops took place in a studio set up at the gallery. Another group spent one session in a disused community centre where they were able to work in smaller groups in more ‘creative space’ on a much larger-scale. In many instances students felt confined in the space of the classroom and they were able to reflect on the way in which different spaces had an impact on their participation and learning.

And was that interesting working away from school?
‘Yeah.’
‘Yeah.’

Did you feel like you were able to do things differently?
‘It made you a bit more … invulnerable. It made it easier for you to think a bit more, because you’re not in the school environment.’

‘It’s like a different place. You don’t usually work there, you usually work in a classroom. But we were working in this room with no desks and chairs and that was a bit unusual. And we were working on the floor as well.’

Case study 5
How did you feel about the work that you did in the gallery?

‘Well I felt completely different about working there. It was much better than in the class … I liked it better than school.’

‘I thought it was kind of better, cos everyone was doing it and they were so into their own work. We could look around and get a lot of different ideas like in school cos you’re just sitting down and there’s one theme and you have to do it.’

‘I think it was … cos it was on like a bigger scale and with different materials. Like in school you’re kind of very limited to paper and like chalk, charcoal, pastels or paint. And it was on a much bigger scale and you could do it wherever you wanted rather than in a book.’

Case study 3

Did you get anything from working in the artist’s studio? And was it different from a gallery?

‘Yes, it was very different because we had space to move around and there was quite an unusual surrounding, but it was different from what you would normally be drawing you know.’ Case study 2

‘Well the whole experience of working in the studio is different from the classroom.’

‘Just being out of the classroom I think it just inspires you to just like create different stuff and I think everyone should get an opportunity to do this because it’s really something that’s enjoyable.’ Case study 4

What’s been the most interesting part of the programme?

‘The best bit was just going outside of school studying art, instead of staying in the classroom all the time.’

What did you get from working in a gallery?

‘There’s no real paintings in here [classroom].’

Case study 1

Environment: case study 3 notes from video footage of workshop

The following section is based on a facilitated discussion between the teacher, gallery educator and artist around the video footage from one of the sessions which took place off-site at a disused community centre. It illustrates a very different approach to learning and teaching in art to that which is prevalent in most school classrooms and echoes some of the above.

The focus of the discussion between the teacher, gallery educator and artist was on the process of learning. The point of reference was the Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework and the team used the following as themes to discuss how the young people were involved in learning: collaborating, experimenting, analysing/questioning, engaging holistically. There was no analysis of spoken language; the focus of discussion was mainly on the ‘visual’: body language, gesture and movement.

Having been taken around the space the young people were presented with the idea of site-specific work and shown a collection of works made by contemporary and modern artists. They formed three groups and each was given their own room which was papered floor to ceiling. Within that room they were encouraged to create a site-specific work on their chosen theme. They worked in combinations of groups, pairs and individuals.

Summary of observation and analysis

The majority of young people chose to work in a small group or pairs; only four young people chose to work individually. The gallery educator commented: ‘The group dynamics changed because they were out of the classroom and they were working on a different scale.’

The research group noted that the young people had progressed from the first session during which they had been reluctant to use bold stokes, close their eyes and take risks. The scale they were working on at Leopold Hall was different; the large paper size and nature of the space meant that the young people were experimenting and taking more risks. The teacher made the following observation: ‘In the classroom they’re neater, more careful, table work is quite limiting. One piece of work is usually developed over a few sessions, here work had to be
completed within a particular timeframe, and they’re working
with more speed – they can’t be small and precious.’ It was
noted that the more pre-determined the idea, the less risk taken.

The research group commented on the physical nature of the
activity – theatrical/staged – involving large movements and
stretching. Although the young people were instructed not to
paint on walls in two cases they used paper and/or objects to
extend the frame. In several cases if they could not reach they
were using charcoal on a stick and in some instances the young
people were using their hands as brushes.

General comments followed about the fact that the young
people seemed more motivated and involved with their work.
Their work was bold and confident and the young people were
engaged in the process. The gallery educator made the following
comment: ‘They didn’t want to stop. The brushes had to be
taken away from them.’ The teacher added ‘There was little
annoying behaviour because they were working in a different
place and the space was bigger.’

The artist described the physical nature of the space, which
made it more difficult for the adults to be present all the time
and intervene in the production of the work – the young people were
taking control of the process. Echoing the comment above he
states, ‘They were split across three rooms and were often
without direct supervision – when they are performing to the
teacher their behaviour is not so good!’

The role of the artist
Previous research into the role of the artist in education indicates
that artists work in different ways and their roles are multi-faceted
and overlapping. The artist as educator, role model, researcher
and in some cases even celebrity performer have been explored
in-depth in a range of other texts (2).

In most projects particularly those at Key Stages 3 and 4, the
young people commented that the artists were working in
different ways from their teachers.

B: ‘Normal art teachers just … we’re working on art and
we’re painting yeah, but when E [the artist] come in we was
doing like little projects like the music bit and walking around
the staffroom.’

Case study 1

Unsurprisingly the young people commented on a different
relationship between the artist and students, describing a way of
working which involved discussion and exchanging ideas and
experiences.

‘He was kind of like your friend and your teacher as well.’

‘He wasn’t as serious as a teacher.’

‘Yeah. He taught you things as a teacher, but then he talked
to you as well. Other teachers don’t.’

Case study 5

‘He wasn’t just a teacher, he helped us with loads of different
things, more than teachers could help us.’

B: ‘And he told us personally like things about himself as well.’

A: ‘And he understands our point of view in a way you know.’

Case study 2

However there were exceptions to this, the older students in
particular commented on similar relationships with their
teachers.

‘I think it’s not different from my teacher … like the teacher
and the student relationship in art is different because it’s
more expressive so you have to think that it’s not just do your
work, you have to talk to them about like how you’re feeling
because that’s involved with your work.’

Case study 4

Also in several instances the students acknowledged their
teachers as artists. And in one of the projects the teacher began
making her own work during the project.

The same student as above adds:

‘I think that G [the artist] just made us feel like an artist, to just
produce the work that is right from our point of view. You
know he just gave us advice behind you know and that was
it, and then you worked from that. And you felt you had been
treated like an artist which I found very inspiring and
motivating and I felt free to do what I thought was right to do.’

Case study 4
Many of the young people (and the teachers) commented on the artist's subject knowledge and the level of thinking and research involved in their practice, as the following illustrates:

'I think she's an educator. She told us a lot of different things, she knew a lot about a different range of artists and like in-depth about them and she can tell you a lot more.'

Case study 3

'When we went to his art gallery we could see his ideas and we saw, he had all these little sketchbooks of drawings before he actually planned them on the big canvas. So he's obviously thought a lot about his drawings and what he's going to do before he puts them down on the big canvas.'

Case study 2

The majority of the artists work through positive reinforcement and praise and they had high expectations and little preconceptions regarding the students. As other comments have already illustrated, in most cases the artist provided additional energy, knowledge and inspiration.

And did you get anything from working with an artist? What did you get from him?

'I got new ideas.'

'I learnt a new way to express myself.'

Case study 2

'Yeah and work more harder. Working with her she gave me like more ... strength. What's the other word, encouragement? Yeah. More encouragement to do what you think and the way you want to do it.'

Case study 3

'With E [the artist] like she pushes us you know like do this. You have to write as well ... so she helps us more.'

Case study 3

Part 3: Who maps the learning?

Overview
The final section explores the data gathered in the extension projects, most of which took place in the summer term 2007. The aim of this aspect of the programme was to establish a longer term picture of the young people’s learning and to engage the students as active contributors to the projects. (Appendix 3)

As has been demonstrated in the previous section, the learning process involved young people in working through collaboration, experimenting and questioning. As such the previous, more traditional methodologies by this stage seemed an unsatisfactory means of exploring their learning. In this stage of the research the students became active participants in the projects, reflecting on their own learning and their own notions of 'value' in relation to the process and outcomes. The gallery educators and artists took on the role of facilitators.
In the previous workshops one of the projects had begun to look at using video as a means of recording the process. Most of the sessions had been documented by an independent media company and in the final workshop session a diary room/video evaluation booth had been set up. Towards the end of this project the young people had been encouraged to experiment and interview each other away from the adults, in less formal situations. To some extent this provided a way of thinking through the proposed involvement of young people in the second part of the research.

Methods
A series of workshops were planned by the gallery educators and artists at key strategic or meaningful points in relation to the first project, for example an end of term event or exhibition of the young people’s work from phase 1. The workshops were planned as continuations of the initial projects and evaluation was built into the activities. The majority of the extension projects involved smaller groups and all included young people from the focus group. One project continued with all the students.

Two of the projects built the evaluation into workshops which involved the students going to the gallery and seeing their work exhibited. For both groups it was the first time they had had the opportunity of coming together to discuss their work on show. In the other two projects evaluation became inseparable and was wrapped up in the creative process. In one case this resulted in a visual response representing the young people’s learning.

Data gathering
The lead researcher proposed a number of creative strategies to enable the young people to make a record of their learning which included: vox pops, sketchbooks, diaries, SMS texting, online discussion, graffiti boards etc.

In the end, all the projects used video to gather data and to record the activities. Young people were also given other means of recording their responses, some preferred working more privately and in two of the projects students made written responses.

Technical skills
Across the projects the young people had varying degrees of technical skill and experience of working with video. For some of the projects teaching the young people how to use the video was crucial to the success of the research. In one of the projects the young people spent some time trying out different roles – location scout, sound recorder, director etc. They also practised being in front of the camera and played with composition.

In other projects there was less emphasis on technical skills and little discussion on roles and film language. This led to varying degrees of quality across the video pieces and in two cases the sound was switched off accidentally, resulting in the audio not being recorded in some sections.

Questions
A template was devised by the lead researcher with a series of questions which could be incorporated into the projects if appropriate. Some of the questions related to the original study and others had emerged from findings in phase 1. They were intended as a starting point, something for the students to amend and build upon. The lead researcher requested that all the gallery educators and artists incorporate the first question ‘What did you get out of the project?’ within the workshops. This was to provide a hook and to enable some consistency when writing up the projects. (Appendix 4)

Some of the students were self-directed and good at devising questions and interviewing, others needed more support. The process of reworking the questions led to the young people taking ownership of the final questions which in some cases were not substantially different from the ones originally proposed. A number of the gallery educators commented on the fact that the questions themselves seemed less important than the way they were asked and who asked them. One of the artists cites the very different responses from the students when they were talking to each other rather than the adults in the group. Another gallery educator also commented on the difference in students when they were left alone.
At one point in the video, a camera held by a young person captures the number of adults observing them. A young person wryly points this out, which does much to paint a picture of the effect of observation upon the subject. However, we felt that after becoming accustomed to the cameras and more comfortable asking each other questions, when we left them alone at the end to ask each other questions without adult supervision, they were more honest and interestingly a little more articulate in their answers.

One of the gallery educators observed that the students seemed quite wooden at the beginning of the project and after the first session talked to the artist about strategies for overcoming their self-consciousness. In order to get them to think about the questions and responses without being so awkward, they developed games based on psychoanalytic methods and explored different scenarios and role-playing. They acted out different characters including the artist, teacher and themselves. The use of props visually supported the transition into being someone else and standing in someone else’s shoes.

In one of the other projects the young people had devised a schedule for the visit to the gallery. They planned where and when the interviews would take place and what questions would be asked at different times. The first interviews were in the gallery foyer where they talked about their expectations before seeing the work. Then they went into the cinema to see the film of their projects and a small group had come out before everyone else with the intention of capturing the after film preview chat. They wanted the interviews and commentary to feel relaxed and informal.

Analysing video data
In the first stage of the project the research team had looked into using the software Transana to code and analyse video data. After seeking advice from several experts it was agreed that it would be inappropriate for this scale of research. The analysis and interpretation of the video material in the first stage had taken place through a facilitated discussion between the teacher, gallery educator and artist. This was based around the unedited video footage from one of the sessions (see part 2, p64). A similar approach was adopted for this last phase of the project.

Each gallery educator was asked to provide the lead researcher with ten minutes of unedited video. For this last stage it was agreed that the discussion would be between the gallery educator and researcher and that the focus of the discussion would be on active outcomes of learning. The point of reference was the Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework and the team used the following as themes to discuss what the learning involves:

- reflection
- meaning
- engagement
- responsibility
- empowerment

In actuality one of the projects presented an edited piece as a stand alone response. The film was made with the intention of gathering the young people’s ideas and opinions but then editing them down into sections which reflected the artist’s intention to provide impressions of evidence of their learning by combining comments made through other evaluation methods. The following statement explains this position:

‘The new project will be structured and informed by the research process (which reflects an artist’s practice of self-analysis). It will question the notion that the research process constructed and delivered by an artist collaborating with students will be more biased (therefore less valid) than an external research process instigated by a research institution. The underlying philosophy is that artists working in the gallery education sector should be able to critique their own pedagogy, questioning their bias as they encounter it and that this process of self-reflection is key to what an artist is able to bring to a project.’

In this instance the discussion was based around the edited video and involved the lead researcher and artist due to the fact that the gallery educator was no longer in post at this time. The data is presented with the other projects below.
Reflection: increased analytical/reflective thinking, articulation of learning

A number of the gallery educators commented on the length of time between the final stage of the project and the initial projects. They wondered how significant the initial project would seem to the young people. However, in all the projects the young people were able to build on the previous work, which had involved the students in a process of analysis and reflection (see previous section).

The process of creative evaluation enabled them to review ideas and reflect on their learning throughout the programme. It involved students formulating and thinking through questions and answers. This included thinking on the spot and also thinking over the period of the workshops. The students considered the initial projects in light of the new initiatives.

In most of the projects the students were given the option of working with the proposed questions and also formulating their own (see questions in previous section). The nature of the questions they asked each other indicated the level at which they were thinking and reflecting on their learning.

What would you change?
What have you gained from this experience?
What did you learn about yourself?
What did you feel about not having a teacher control everything you did?

Case study 3

As has been previously stated two of the projects involved students taking part in role-play. They were asked to respond to questions as if they were their peers and in one of these projects they also played the part of the artist and teacher. The following comments provide an insight into their understanding of the context of their learning and the roles and positions of those individuals supporting that learning.

Were there any techniques you will try using in the class later on?
‘Yes, I would like to give the children more freedom. Because they seemed to respond well and behave well. And the results were very good, the work was outstanding.’

Did you find anything difficult? And if yes, why?
‘I found giving someone else the control of the class difficult. And the supplies and organising the trips for the children to go out and work somewhere else.’

Case study 3 student in role-play as teacher

Meaning: using shared knowledge and skills

As has been noted elsewhere in this report and in other studies, in general the emphasis in many school art rooms is on a technique-based approach to teaching art and making rather than questioning or thinking. Consequently there are limited opportunities for students to engage with issues and meaning making. The projects in this study enabled students to work from more personal perspectives which in many instances resulted in them taking ownership of themes and ideas so the process became more meaningful.

What did you do for your contemporary art piece?
‘Well I did a picture that was about … anger. It was about … anger. And it had lots of different textiles and it was three-dimensional. Because we could do anything I just decided to do what I was feeling that day and I was feeling angry.’

‘What I liked about the project it is that we didn’t get given an actual task to do. We got given textiles and materials … We didn’t get given a stimulus, we got to think about it ourselves so all the pieces are all really individual and not at all similar which is cool. That’s why I liked it.’

Case study 3
In the case of the following student, she ceased to be interested purely in good marks and external drivers. Her self-confidence increased as she became personally motivated and interested in the meaning of her work. During the project she began to think for herself and as the following illustrates she moved on from being concerned purely with technical perfection.

'The project has made a difference to my attitude and views and how I do my artwork. This is because it made me more free, for example, I stop thinking about the mark I am going to get and start thinking about what it means and having fun.'

Case study 5, written comment

'Normally when I do my work, I have to make everything perfect. I have this thing in my head. I'm a perfectionist. And so ... after doing this workshop it's not about perfection it's about the lines you make and the things you create out of that, it doesn't really matter that it's not perfect ... cos you can see how you've progressed.'

Case study 5, transcription from video

It should be noted that this student has continued to work in this way and she also continues to achieve high grades.

One of the projects had looked at and continued to explore the complex issues surrounding the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery. The gallery educator commented on the gradual process of dealing with the subject and the subtlety of enabling students to engage in meaning making rather just receiving information.

'G [the artist] hasn't “force fed” the students information on slavery. The visits to the museum, seeing his work and more recently coming back together to talk about their work has enabled them time to reflect on their ideas. This was demonstrated on a practical level through the mixing of paint, which resulted in focused looking, seeing difference, reassessing each other and looking more deeply at themselves.'

One of the young people asked her peers about their views on slavery.

What are your views? Do you think you know more now than you did before the project?

'I think I know more about slavery now than I did before.'

'I don't really like it.'

'I hate talking about it.'

Why don't you like talking about it? Does it make you angry?

'I feel bad inside.'

Do you feel betrayed or something like that?

'Yeah.'

The interview continues with another student.

And what are your views on slavery?

'I just know that it's wrong.'

Do you think it affects you today? Do you feel it's still going on, among the community?

'Yeah, in other countries and different forms as well, like in sweat shops and stuff.'

Case study 4

Engagement: increased involvement, commitment, passion/pleasure

The approach of the artist as well as the increased numbers of adults involved with the projects often resulted in an environment where the young people became actively engaged with the projects (see previous section). One gallery educator commented:

'They were engaged on a physical level, they were making so much effort to get ideas across. They wanted to do more and they didn't want to go home!'

Other gallery educators commented that students had taken work home or had carried on working through their breaks.
In a number of instances it was noted that the artists had high expectations of the young people. This seemed to have a positive impact on the students particularly those who were seen by the schools as less motivated. In one case the gallery educator commented on two of the students who had been very unconfident and awkward at the beginning of the project. Both the teacher and gallery educator were surprised at how engaged they were towards the end of the first project and in the two final sessions. They were interviewed by two of their peers and made the following comments.

What have you enjoyed the most about working with G [the artist]?
‘I liked the time that we got to spend in the artist’s studio. It was different to school ... and you were with more people, and it was better.’

Would you say you concentrated more?
‘Yeah.’

When you finished your portrait did you feel pleased?
‘I took it back to school and I worked on it at school. I felt proud.’

‘I think mine was all right. I liked it. I worked on it at school as well.’

Case study 4

Another student commented further.

What was your favourite thing out of all the things we did during the project?

‘It would have to be completing my art piece ... I was kind of proud of it because it took quite a long time to do it and it took a lot of thought.’

Case study 3

External endorsement for their work was a key motivating factor for some of the students. As has been noted previously, a good majority of the students had told people about the project and in three projects the work was shown to wider audiences (see empowerment). In one instance the students worked outside the classroom on large sheets of paper on the floor in a place where other students were passing. The interaction and discussion between these students and a wider audience of peers and subsequent approval of their work had a huge impact on the students working on the project. They were proud of their work and pleased with the response from their peers. The following comment was typical of the reaction from other students.

‘What a beautiful piece of work. We never get to do this.’

Case study 5

Responsibility: taking ownership of individual and collaborative learning development and direction
Throughout the continuation projects the young people were supported to become more independent and to take their own initiative. In some cases the young people were involved in the process of structuring the projects and they all became active participants in the evaluation. A number of the projects built on the previous workshops and provided the students with strategies to ask questions, express their opinions and think about their learning. These strategies involved both technical and analytical skills. One gallery educator made the following comment.

‘Then they were playing with the cameras and just enjoying being there. We had given them the tools. They really needed to have that space away from the adults to take ownership of the project.’

The young people reflected back on the previous workshops. The more personalised approach to learning and subsequent level of engagement had led to a greater sense of student ownership in the previous projects. In turn this led to students taking more responsibility for their role in the project and subsequent learning. The following conversation is between two students who were commenting on the previous workshop.
Part 3: Who maps the learning?

For next time what do you think you would like to do for the next workshop?

'I really, really liked it when we got to paint on the walls, not directly on the walls, and they were really big and we got to work as groups and we had our own space so we could do whatever we wanted to in that space, within reason. That was good. I would do that again."

What did you feel about not having a teacher having to control everything you did?

'I thought it was great because art is supposed be about expressing yourself and for once we actually got to do that without being told what to do and how to do it.'

She commented further:

'We never got a task to do we got to think about it ourselves."

Case study 3

The teacher had commented previously on the positive impact of the project on the students' behaviour and their ability to stay focused on the task. They had worked in different spaces and at some points they worked independently and away from adult supervision.

Taking responsibility for the direction of the projects and staying on task became a consistent finding of the new initiatives. In all cases the students took responsibility for their part in the project. They were inventive and playful and even when they were not directly supervised they remained focused on the task in hand.

The students took on the responsibility of carrying out the activities and negotiated with each other over their individual roles and involvement and on the successful completion of the activity. The following comment highlights the compromising that went on among a group of students. Having been interviewed it was the turn of the second group (3 and 4) to be the interviewers but an individual in the first group (1 and 2) was not convinced they were taking this role seriously and decided to leave the interview.

1. 'OK nice meeting you."
   Gets up to leave
   1. 'We're going to get in trouble for this, we're mucking around with camera.'
   2. 'Can you tell us why you're leaving please?'
   3. 'Please tell us why you're leaving."
   1. 'I have a very important meeting."
   2. 'Have respect.'
   4. 'Yes they sat down and let you interview them.'
   1. sits down again
   1. 'OK any more questions?'
   Interview continues ...

Case study 4

The students learnt to develop respect for their peers. The following comment illustrates that they developed empathy for one another and supported each other's engagement in the project.

This is an impression of J as an artist. I didn't know what to do with him cos he doesn't really like express himself that much like, so I thought of a way in which I could relate to him. And like we're both Africans ... And you mention the statue in your anecdote, yeah? ... So I decided to focus on that for my representation of you as an artist. And there's common ground because I like to do this African art and you're African yourself.'

Case study 5

Empowerment: increased self and cultural awareness and confidence

As has been evidenced in the last section the young people became more independent and began taking ownership of their work. This in turn led to the students becoming more confident and able to express themselves.
What have you gained most from this experience?

‘It would probably have to be my individuality because with this workshop it made me think more independently and my piece is the most individual and independent yet.’

Case study 3

Another student commented:

‘I’ve been able to express myself freely … and with working with different materials … which meant I’ve been able to work with African pattern material and it’s like enabled me to have like passion over what I’m doing. So I’ve really enjoyed my work. The bird’s wings symbolises that freedom of expression.’

Case study 5

One of the artists talked about the way in which the young people grew more confident in expressing themselves through their use of language. Certain words like ‘intervention’ and ‘anecdote’ had moved into the vocabulary of the class. She commented on how empowering it is to be able to use and understand more complex words and therefore be able to communicate complex ideas.

In this last stage of the project the students were being encouraged not only to take more ownership of their work but also in their learning and the reflection process. Not all the students were confident about using the video to record this process. In some cases it took time for the young people to feel comfortable about using the cameras; some of the students were very self-conscious and shy about being filmed. In these cases the creative strategies employed by the artists helped to create the conditions for the young people to be able to express themselves and towards the end they all talked confidently.

In other situations the young people responded immediately to being able to film the workshops and took control. In giving the young people the camera there was almost a role reversal. In several cases, unprompted, the young people interviewed the artists and were very confident in asking them questions. One of the gallery educators states:

‘They were able to critique and comment on projects and turned the cameras to ask questions of the artists.’

The young people in one project used the camera as way of introducing the artwork and the students in the group. And one of the young people filmed the spectacle of the gallery educators all with cameras photographing them.

In one instance a student confidently expressed what she saw as the limitations of the project.

What were your views about slavery before this project?

‘This project hasn’t changed my views. In fact the project doesn’t link with slavery that much. I don’t think us sitting in front of the mirror for five weeks really connected us with slavery. I think there was a whole chunk of this project missing.’

Other students disagreed; the following comment reinforces other opinions expressed previously:

‘I learnt about black history, something I didn’t know.’

Case study 4

The opportunity to show their work in a public space other than school was incredibly empowering for the students. In one of the projects when they visited the gallery and saw the exhibition, they were comparing their work with the work of the other students. Their work stood out for them and they were really pleased and proud about their contribution.

‘I like the idea of all the other schools’ contributions. It was interesting to see their work and compare it with ours and see how other schools coped with doing the whole project.’ He adds, ‘The best parts were when I was performing. It runs in my heritage … Nigerian.’

How does it feel seeing your work in the gallery?

‘It feels weird. I didn’t think I’d ever get any of my artwork in the gallery. It feels good that people can see what I can come up with.’

Case study 2, gallery educator to student
Part 4: Methodology

Focus and approach
The research programme set the conditions for continued reflection and review. It changed over the course of the programme; the group worked through different ideas and a range of strategies was used to address the overarching question. As has been noted previously, the generic consistent approach taken at the beginning of the research developed into a more organic process, responding to the projects and the specific contexts, and involving the young people. There was a shift away from measuring the outcomes to looking at the processes involved.

In parallel to this, the role of the lead researcher also changed. During the extended programme the responsibility for the research projects was handed back to the gallery educators. Rather than a centralised research programme there were localised research projects and ‘reports’ which took the form of a series of video work. The researcher became a ‘critical friend’ advising on an overarching process, and facilitating individual and group discussions around the findings.

The research programme ran in conjunction with existing projects set up by the individual galleries, all of which had established aims and objectives. This led to a research programme with multiple aims and objectives. In retrospect, narrowing the focus and research question would have provided a greater depth to the research programme.

Data gathering
There were pros and cons around the different approaches and data gathering methods. And individual students were evidently more comfortable with some methods as opposed to others. During the course of the programme there were a range of opportunities for feedback and commentary, and the same questions were asked in different ways.

The gallery educators questioned how useful the findings from the questionnaires were. They provide numerical data and evidenced an increase in learning outcomes, however the gallery educators were keen to go beyond this and to look more closely at the learning process.

In general the gallery educators felt that the data gathered from the exit and entry activities was more informative than the questionnaires. The change in perceptions of the young people over the course of the projects provided more of an insight into the learning journey. A couple of the gallery educators expressed surprise at the level of detail some of the young people went into when writing comments. These activities tended to be more relaxed and informal than some of the other data gathering methods. Also, the fact that they were more open questions meant that they were less likely to ‘lead’ responses. It is worth noting that in most instances comments were made anonymously. A number of the gallery educators have continued to use these activities in new projects. They suggested that the questions would need to be reconsidered in the light of different initiatives.

Most of the gallery educators found the focus groups too formal and preferred the informality and more creative approach offered through working with video later in the programme. One gallery educator commented that by the end of the programme the young people had far more ownership of the process and they were ‘talking with ease’.
There were a number of concerns expressed around the selection of young people taking part in the focus groups and latterly in the extended projects. Labelling (good at art, resistant and 'wild card') was problematic but it provided a way of involving a more representative and wider group of young people and not just the usual articulate students. In one instance a student who had been defined as resistant provided some of the more astute comments in the group discussion. There was only one situation when it proved difficult to get much in the way of a response from an individual student.

**Interpretation and presentation**
The variety of approaches and the quantitative and more qualitative data have been considered and combined. This report assesses the outcomes; it also tells the stories and shares the experiences along the way.

The gallery educators have been central to the interpretation of the findings and to some degree the artists have also been involved in this analysis. However a shortcoming of the project has been the involvement of the teachers – their views have informed the overall findings but they have not played a substantive role in the research programme.

The programme operated on a number of different levels and has many different outcomes which have engaged participants and partners in different ways. And in the context of the national enquire programme it will continue to inform the development of practice more widely as well as providing evidence of ‘good practice’ for funders. In this respect the research is being presented on a number of levels and the findings have been pulled together in different forms, from the young people’s artwork, to images documenting the process, to the video works, to the individual gallery educator’s reports. All speak differently to the range of audiences.

**Issues for the future**
- Gallery education practice is diverse and nuanced and making things fit into generic frameworks misses the depth and complexity of the engagement.
- However, a common language needs to be established to speak to people in a way which is understandable and makes the impact of a project and the learning explicit.
- Links between the creative process and evaluation to form embedded process-orientated collaborative evaluation. It would be useful to explore further.
- Ideally data needs to be collected progressively using both quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Triangulating the data gathered between young people, teachers, artists (not realised in this programme) would provide a greater level of rigour and should be explored in new research initiatives.
- There is a role for an external researcher/’critical friend’ to further support the development of a ‘community of critical enquirers’.
- New projects should empower young people to take responsibility for their own creativity and learning and ensuring their voices are central.
- Teachers, artists, and gallery educators should come together prior to and during projects to reflect on the process.
- There is a real opportunity to build on these projects and to revisit some of these to explore the longer term learning of all the parties involved.
- This level of research and evaluation, particularly when working more creatively, requires additional funding and is outside the resources of most gallery education programmes.
Conclusions and recommendations

The *enquire* programme has provided the London cluster with a space to think, explore and question further the contribution of gallery education to young people's learning. The research has validated the work of gallery educators and teachers within and outside of their organisations – it has shone a light on this practice.

The research findings show the effect of contemporary gallery education practice and the impact on young people’s learning. It also reveals a positive shift in students’ attitudes towards contemporary art. The projects have enabled young people to see art as an expanded field of practice, opening up new meaning. There is strong evidence of increased learning in, about and through art.

These research findings correspond to the *Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework*. It illustrates a particular approach to learning embodied by contemporary arts practice. The young people's learning involved dialogue and took place through experimenting and problem-solving which led to meaning making and therefore increased engagement. Outcomes included responsibility and empowerment. Ultimately the learning became increasingly student-centred as the programme developed.

Points for consideration
Arts practice informs and underpins gallery education. The artist is central and projects take place in different learning environments supported by a wide range of media and resources.

Students commented on the following:

The significance of the artist: a practitioner working alongside a teacher who provided specialist subject knowledge and used an art vocabulary. The artists provided positive role models, demonstrating a deep level of engagement with their practice. They had high expectations of the students and encouraged them to take risks and think differently.

The importance of the learning environment: in many instances students felt confined in the limited space of the classroom. Creative spaces have included artists' studios, galleries, empty or redundant rooms/buildings and even school foyers. Flexibility is required in art spaces to allow for different ways of working; students tended to be more physically active and were working on bigger scales (away from the A4/A3).

The range of media and the quality of materials on offer: in school there was a predominance of drawing and painting and these projects introduced students to new media, including sound, video, installation and textiles. Where projects used more traditional media e.g. drawing, the students were encouraged to really explore mark-making using different materials.

The wider range of artistic references and resources: the projects offered the opportunity for students to engage with ‘real’ artworks both in the gallery and in production at the artists’ studios. Also there were a wide range of reproductions of art through print material and books. Artists made extensive use of projectors, when available, to present other artists’ work.

The role of the gallery educator: this has been outside the resources of this research programme, however students commented on their differing and overlapping roles. The extended projects in particular highlighted the role of the gallery educator as cultural broker: artist educator to trouble shooter.

Recommendations

Across the programme the galleries set up project teams whereby artists and teachers were encouraged to work in partnership. These types of projects require time and resources to enable effective partnerships to develop. The benefits are that they have a positive effect on young people's learning and offer new insights into pedagogical models for the curriculum; the impact of which needs to be addressed in the longer term.

The following could be considered in relation to new programmes:
- initiate discussions across professions between gallery educators, artists and teachers and where possible young people to explore collaborative learning and exchange
- develop and formalise a system of skills-sharing and continual professional development for teachers, artists and gallery educators
- involve artists earlier on in the process, particularly at the planning stages and consider appointing an artist to co-curate new programmes
• ensure that teachers take on creative as well as classroom management and pedagogical roles within new programmes
• explore the role of the gallery educator as broker and key to delivering a cultural offer

Appendix 1: Contemporary Gallery Education Learning Framework

WHAT (Outcomes)
Reflection
Meaning
Engagement
Responsibility
Empowerment

WHERE (Context)
Personal
Socio-cultural
Site-specific

Art Practice

HOW (Process)
Collaborating
Analysing and reflecting
Experimenting
Engaging holistically

Notes
(1) The GLOs were developed by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG), University of Leicester for the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA).


References


Art practice informs and underpins each of the different aspects of the framework. Art practice includes the content of the artwork and the particular nature of the processes involved in its creation, as described earlier in this paper. The categories refer to the following:

**Where the learning happens (context)**

**Personal** – The prior knowledge, experience and motivation of the learner.
**Socio-cultural** – The nature of the community of learners (the group) and the facilitation by the educator.
**Site-specific** – The nature of the learning environment, e.g. the history and geography of the gallery.

**How the learning develops (process)**

**Collaborating** – By valuing individual responses within a group, sharing learning, dialogue.
**Analysing and reflecting** – By questioning, contextualising, reconsidering.
**Experimenting** – By engaging, revealing, risk-taking, maintaining open-endedness.
**Engaging holistically** – By responding on emotional and physical as well as cognitive levels.

**What the learning involves (outcomes)**

**Reflection** – Increased analytical/reflective thinking, articulation of learning.
**Meaning** – Using shared knowledge and skills.
**Engagement** – Increased involvement, commitment, passion/pleasure.
**Responsibility** – Taking ownership of individual and collaborative learning development and direction.
**Empowerment** – Increased self and cultural awareness and confidence.

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**Appendix 2: Focus group questions**

**Introductions: project and observer – length of group discussion**

**Themes: art, artists, galleries and your experience of Creative Connections**

Stress no right or wrong answers

Ask for permission to use the discussion in reports to funders and other people involved in arts education; stress confidentiality and check it’s OK to record and take photographs

**Individually**

1. **Referring to artwork – can you describe what you did?**

Can you talk a bit about the idea?
What are you pleased with?
What would you change?
What are you going to do with it?
Have you told anyone about it?
How does this work compare to previous work you have made?

**Group discussion**

2. **Art**

What did you think art was before the project?
Has this changed? In what way has this changed?

3. **Artists**

What did you think artists did before the project?
Has this changed? In what way has this changed?

Did you get anything from working with the artist? How was the artist working with you? *Prompt: artist as educator, role model, facilitator, thinker, maker etc*
4 Galleries
What did you think a gallery was for before the project?
Has this changed? In what way has this changed?
Did you get anything from working in a gallery? Can you give examples?
Did you get anything from visiting the artists' studio? Can you expand?

5 Process
Have you worked well as a group? Please describe.
Have you done things in new ways or taken any risks? Please give examples.
How are you involved and how does the activity make you feel?

6a Reflection/progression
What did you think you'd get out of this project?
Has this changed? In what way has this changed?
Has the project made you do anything differently?
Prompt: art, other subjects, courses, career, leisure, personal, other
Have there been any unexpected outcomes of the project? Has anything surprised you?

6b Reflection/progression
Has the project made a difference to the teacher?
Has the project made a difference to the artist?
Has the project made a difference to the school?

7 Programme
What have been the most interesting parts of the programme so far?
What would you change?
Thank you for your comments.

Appendix 3: Extended programme, edited project details

Whitechapel Gallery

Participants
Three original focus group students and two or three other students from the participating project group.

Aims
- To devise creative ways of enabling young people to comment on their own learning
- To involve students in the creative evaluation of their own learning
- Provide rich documentary evidence to inform the research
- To get a longer term picture of learning and see how student contributions change given more creative conditions

Activity
The project involved two short, artist-led workshops for a group of six students. The second workshop was based at the gallery where the young people went to see their work during the Creative Connections exhibition. Whitechapel's film was intended to be an unedited documentation of the young people responding directly to seeing their work in the gallery.

Activities for young people included the following:
- learning to use a video camera
- reflecting on the project and their experiences
- devising their own questions to ask their peers about the project, the exhibition and what they have gained from the programme

The intention was for the project to be driven by the young people themselves with guidance from the artist.
SPACE

Participants
All the students from the original project took part in the extension project.

Activities

Workshop 1: Revisiting the National Portrait Gallery
The young people took part in the Abolition Trail as part of their Portraits People and Abolition exhibition highlighting individuals who have been associated with the slave trade. They also looked at Devotional by artist in residence Sonia Boyce, a British Afro-Caribbean artist who lives and works in London. Her installation pays homage to the great musical tradition created within the African diaspora in Britain.

Workshop 2: Drawing exercises in SPACE commissioning studio
The sessions began with drawing games and playing around with mark-making in contrast to the emphasis on detail and accuracy of the self-portraits they had drawn and painted in the initial workshops. Students were paired up with someone from a different school in an effort to mix the group.

Workshop 3: Critique of exhibition and research questions
The students visited Hackney Museum to see their work as part of Godfried Donker’s installation as part of the Abolition 07 exhibiting artists. The creative evaluation project took place after this session at SPACE.

Bow Arts Trust

Participants
A self-selected group including two of the original contributors to the focus group.

Aims

• Document and evaluate the young people’s experiences using digital film.
• Teach core filming and interviewing skills and vocabulary.
• Provide richer documentary evidence to inform the research prior to embarking on the next stage of the programme in the autumn.

Activities

Two half-day sessions which involved learning to use video cameras with a new artist in a studio at Bow Arts Trust. The students developed film and interview skills and explored creative ways of asking questions.

Day 1
• Learning how to use cameras.
• Devising questions.
• Practising interviewing.
• Scouting for locations.

Day 2
• Game to consider the project from different perspectives. Empathy developed through assuming different roles and exploring feelings in response to given problem situations.
• Girls took turns exploring and exchanging roles within the film crew.
• In groups devised questions that they would want to ask the teacher, artist and students.
• Supporting the idea of standing in someone else’s shoes visually – used enormous photocopies of people photographed in different locations with heads cut out.
• Young people devised the questions, shot the film, took care of the sound, were interviewers and interviewees and took complete control of the evaluation process.

Chisenhale

Participants
The original focus group and three additional students.

Project

Students worked with the same artist from the previous project to explore research methodologies and evaluate their experience of the Continuation Part I project. The project aimed to explore the implications and usefulness of research gathered by collaboration between artist and participants and the benefits of an evaluation process to the participants themselves.
The emphasis will be on participants placing their experience of the previous project within the context of their everyday learning, extending the aim of the Extension and Continuation to create continuity between the gallery and the classroom.

Aims
• To look at the *enquire* project within a larger context of participants’ experiences and understanding of art, drawing a line between personal, school based and gallery/*enquire* based learning.

• To take the research agenda as an opportunity to give participants a forum in which to articulate their ideas textually, visually and in discussion.

• To discover and develop new ways of approaching research and gathering data, using creative practice as a starting point.

Workshop activities
In the first session, participants related an anecdote about an art experience. From these stories, texts and charcoal portraits of one another, participants were asked, in pairs, to create a narrative portrait charting the artistic journey of their partner, including their experience of the Continuation Part I project.

In the second session, due to the lack of classroom space, illness and absent participants, the group decided to cut up and combine the portraits to form a larger collaborative piece. The session focused on recollection and reinterpretation, with participants using an overarching narrative account of the project, identifying key episodes, such as visiting the gallery, taking the tube, working with the artist and looking at other artists’ work. The choice of episodes was determined by participants from a discussion of the drawings they produced in the first part of the session, representing a memory from the first project. In most cases, these drawings depicted a memorable piece participants had made themselves.

In the final session the group rolled out a large sheet of paper outdoors in the school’s main thoroughfare. Taking up a position along the length of the paper, participants were asked to draw a representation of the participant to their right as an artist, using all the knowledge they had gained about that person during the previous sessions. In the second half, participants made a corresponding drawing or intervention in response to the portraits of themselves done by their neighbour. The aim was to represent what they wanted to take from the project into the classroom. In addition, participants selected and answered two of the core research questions and used the video camera to document the session. The drawings by participants, their descriptions of their work to camera and responses to the research questions was revealing: a new sense of ownership over and passion for their work, learning how to work as part of a group, an appreciation of art practice as a process of meaning making and having fun, were all expressed.

Appendix 4: Extension project questions

Proposed questions
What did you get out of the project?
What made that happen or made you feel like that?
Has the project made a difference to you in any way?
Has it made a difference to your attitudes or views on anything?
Do you do anything differently?

Secondary questions relating to the context of learning
What did you think about the different spaces you worked in? (school, studio, gallery, artist studio). Did they have an impact on your work?
Did you use different materials?
Did these have an impact on your work?
Did you have access to different resources? (equipment, images of artists’ work etc)
Did this have an impact on your work?
How did the artist work with you?
How did the gallery educator work with you?

This one may or may not be relevant
How did you feel about your work being on display?
NORTH EAST CLUSTER PHASE 2.1 RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by ISIS Arts in collaboration with the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle, and partner artists and teachers.

Final report by Anna Goulding (University of Newcastle) in collaboration with Chris Whitehead, Andrew Newton (research advisors) and Mary Lowe, Sharon Bailey (ISIS).
**Introduction**

Following the recommendations made in the *enquire* phase 1 report, this project focuses on the experiences of artists working in gallery education contexts with children and young people. The project involved two artists possessed of extensive experience of working in art gallery education mentoring two artists with relatively little experience in this area. As such, a peer group of professionals was developed and supported, providing both formal and informal Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The aim of the model was to provide the artists with:

- relevant training, comprising both formal and informal learning
- valuable peer support and potential career development
- the opportunity to share skills and gain an understanding of different professional perspectives
- mutual investigation of their practice, and a practical means of developing understanding, testing ideas and improving educational provision for children and young people

The research focused on a project developed in collaboration with ISIS Arts. It involved two artists with extensive experience of working with young people sharing their skills and knowledge with two less experienced artists. The artists decided to form pairs, each comprising one mentor and one mentee. The pairings seemed to suggest themselves naturally; the mentee and mentor in each pair noted similarities in their work.

During the project there were two visits to art galleries and six day-long sessions at Blyth Community College. The artists, teacher and students attended the visits. The time was split into two blocks. In the first block the group visited the Big M at Woodhorn Colliery Museum in Ashington and watched various films (including one by each of the mentors), which informed the videos that the pupils then made, over three sessions. For the second block there was a visit to the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, which they toured unsupervised. Marcus Coates’s video installation *Dawn Chorus* (2006) was amongst the artworks on show. They followed this with a guided tour around Newcastle University's Hatton Art Gallery to see *This Will Not Happen Without You*: A touring exhibition from the collective archives of The Basement Group, Projects UK and Locus+ 1977–2006, chosen by the artists because it offered perspectives on curating. This aspect was not the focus of the work that the students subsequently produced, however. In school the students were divided into two groups and worked with each of the pairs of artists in turn.

The project involved Year 12 pupils studying Art and Design AS level. It was not compulsory but the teacher indicated that if their work were to engage with the theme of ‘contrast’, it could be submitted as coursework. There were twenty-one volunteers, aged between sixteen and seventeen.

**ISIS Arts**

ISIS promotes the professional status of the artist. It initiates and manages artist residencies, productions and exhibitions, and works with artists on collaborative projects and events. It also provides arts projects to benefit individual artists, schools and communities.

ISIS is a not-for-profit organisation and receives revenue funding from Arts Council England North East, Northumberland County Council and Newcastle City Council. It works with around seventy artists a year on its residency programme and a further forty as part of its training programmes. Based in the centre of Newcastle, it supports artist residencies across the northern region.

ISIS has a digital facility serving artists in the region and energetically promotes an interdisciplinary approach to the use of new media in the arts.

The two mentor artists had participated in the previous phase of *enquire*; they were asked to take part in the project to add a sense of continuity. The process to select the mentees became the responsibility of the mentors. They drew up a list of artists known to them; these artists were approached and asked to participate.
The participating artists
Kelly Richardson (1) (henceforth KR) is a mid-career digital-media artist with extensive experience of working with young people. She was one of the practitioners involved in the previous enquire project (Newman & Whitehead 2006).

John Quinn (henceforth JQ) is a mid-career digital media artist with a strong performance background and extensive experience of working with young people. Previously the education coordinator at ISIS, he also contributed to the first enquire project, but not in his capacity as an artist.

Both mentees are early- to mid-career digital media artists. Neither had much experience in education, although Ben Jones (henceforth BJ) had attended an ISIS training programme for artists in schools.

Cecilia Stenborn (2) (henceforth CS) focuses mainly on video and drawing in her work. In describing her practice, she states that she ‘uses herself as a template for the individual, exploring notions of identity and relationships in the mediated world.’ (personal commentary 2007)

Ben Jones (3) is interested in how people interact with themselves, each other and their environment through popular culture and mass media (personal commentary 2007).

Blyth Community College
Blyth Community College is a mixed comprehensive school for children aged between thirteen and eighteen years; with 1,293 students it is the main provider of education for this age group in the town. The sixth form is larger than average, with 260 students.

Most students are of white, mainly British backgrounds, with only very small numbers of students from Black-African, Bangladeshi, Chinese and other heritages (Ofsted 2005).

Overall the socio-economic background of students is below average, with a high proportion of students coming from very disadvantaged areas. The number of students eligible for free school meals in the sixth form is twice the national average for that age group.

Blyth Community College was last inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in 2005. The report stated that:

The overall effectiveness of the college is satisfactory, with many good aspects. Current improvement is rapid and the college no longer has serious weaknesses. Although standards in tests and examinations are still too low, students are achieving well in their current work. This is because of good and often very good, teaching that has been developed through good leadership and sound management. Ofsted, 2005

Standards on entry to the sixth form are well below average (Ofsted 2005).

In 2004 the college achieved Artsmark Gold in recognition of its high level of provision in the arts – part of a national award scheme managed by Arts Council England. The Ofsted report in 2005 concluded that in relation to art and design in the sixth form, teaching was good, while standards were average.

Furthermore, the report noted that: ‘Students’ views of the sixth form are positive, and they are confident that their views matter. They appreciate the hard work of teachers and the mature relationships they have.’ (Ofsted 2005) The project’s participating students were all in the sixth form.

Research questions
The research project addresses a number of research questions relating to pedagogical skill-sharing amongst artists:

- what pedagogical models are utilised by the artists and what sorts of outcomes are intended?
- in what ways has the experience of skill-sharing had an impact on the artists in terms of their attitudes to pedagogy, to art and to young people?
- in what ways has the experience of the activity (i.e. the project) had an impact on the artists in terms of their attitudes to pedagogy, to art and to young people?
The context for the research at Newcastle University
The research team is drawn from the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, which has numerous research-active staff and doctoral students, a strong research culture and an emphasis on interdisciplinary, collaborative research. The core disciplinary areas are museum, gallery and heritage studies. Individual team members bring to this project significant expertise in, and experience of, qualitative research conducted in relation to museum and gallery visiting, and participation in museum and gallery activities. In particular, members of the research team have been involved in:

- The Contribution of Museums to an Inclusive Community: an exploratory study – a project examining the contribution of museums to the inclusive community (ref R000223294), funded by ESRC
- Five Arts Cities research project looking at the impact upon older peoples’ lives of participation in gallery education activities, funded by Arts Council England and Channel 5
- DfES-funded Museums and Galleries Education Programme 2 (Stanley et al. 2004)
- enquire phase 1 – see the North East cluster report in Inspiring Learning in Galleries (Newman & Whitehead 2006)
- Artists’ Insights research project exploring the impact of writers and visual artists working with young people and educators/facilitators in cultural sites and schools, funded by Arts Council England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (Buckley et al. forthcoming 2008)
- general and extensive research into theoretical and historical museology and art theory

Theoretical frameworks
Teaching knowledges
Different aspects of teaching have been conceptualised, and teacher knowledge has been categorised into subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical-content knowledge and curricular knowledge (Shulman 1986: 47).

Subject-matter knowledge is defined as the amount and organisation of subject-based knowledge in the mind of the teacher (Shulman 1986). In this project, this is the artists’ knowledge about contemporary digital and film media.

Pedagogical-content knowledge consists of:

The most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations and demonstrations – in a word the ways of representing the subject which make it comprehensible to others … [it] also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult. Shulman, 1986

In this project, this is how the artists communicate their subject-matter knowledge to the young people and how they conceptualise such communication.

Curricular knowledge is knowledge of the scope and sequence of teaching programmes. One would expect teachers in schools to develop this knowledge, while an artist–educator may not have had significant experience in this area.

The different aspects can interact: for example, it may be that an educator with strong artistic knowledge is able to use this to plan and deliver successful teaching interactions. In turn, the experience of teaching may enrich subject-matter knowledge. Without pedagogical skills, however, it is difficult to communicate subject matter. Equally, an artist–educator may have strong subject-matter knowledge but, without training or aptitude, may lack pedagogical-content knowledge and curricular knowledge. Furthermore, if an artist perceives her/himself as operating outside formal education, and does not wish to be restricted by curricular requirements, s/he may consciously not acquire or apply curricular knowledge.
The different pedagogical approaches of artists have been well documented. There are a variety of ways of conceptualising the role of artist within pedagogical settings. In 2002 Emily Pringle categorised artists in educational settings as, variously:

- educators – where the artists come closest to adopting a conventional ‘teaching’ role (p.19)
- collaborators – where the artists rely on working with the participants (p.25)
- social activists – when the agenda for projects is motivated by social exclusion issues, and the artists perceive they have a responsibility to ‘empower the participants’ (p.102)
- researchers – where artists explore how to develop their own individual practice; or investigate the nature of the knowledge created between themselves and the participants; or develop models of good practice in order to ‘improve the world’ (p.31)

Veronica Sekules, in her comprehensive genealogy of practice (2003), described the differing role of the artist in residence as:

- artisan–craftworker – teaching pupils how to copy craft techniques, or the ‘try-apply’ method (p.142)
- conceptual thinker – acting as a creative facilitator – their experimentation acting as a catalyst for new work in school (p.144)
- celebrity performer – adopting a cult personality status (p.143)
- issue-based activist – effecting a ‘life-changing’ impact upon participants and/or extending the artist’s own political and social messages (p.144)

Working largely outside the structure and constraints of the school curriculum, artists, as compared with teachers, are presumed to be more open to risk-taking and more interested in artistic processes than in the successful creation of a final product (i.e. an artwork) than teachers (Harding 2005).

Paul Martin, researching adult learning in the discipline of fine art, observes that ‘a significant barrier to learning for mature students is the extent to which established perceptions, values and beliefs can filter and block their ability to transform their understanding of the world in which they live.’ (Martin 2001: 1)

For Martin it is necessary to challenge existing frameworks if new meaning is to be made. This has important implications for artists trying to enable students to ‘unlearn’ previous preconceptions about the subject. Martin draws on Jack Mezirow’s observations that individuals tend to filter new experiences through existing structures and, in order to ‘avoid anxiety’ or conform to peer group expectations, they merely reinforce existing constructs (Mezirow 1991: 1). In this context it is interesting to investigate how the artists address the effects of peer pressure and the operation of established norms upon the learning they instigate.

**Socio-Constructivism**

Socio-Constructivism implies that teaching is a subtle process, reliant on dialogue, which builds on the learner’s knowledge. It should be recognised that within the field of studies in constructivism there are various terms and schools of thought associated with these perspectives on learning. For the purposes of this report the focus will be primarily on co-constructivism. Definitions of the concept and process of co-construction vary and depend upon the theoretical context in which they are embedded:

> Common to most theoretical contexts of co-construction is the implication of some kind of collaborative activity, and, through joint patterns of awareness, of seeking some sort of convergence, synthesis, intersubjectivity, or shared understanding, with language as a central mediator. (Reusser 2001: 2059)

While constructivist learning theories may not be well known (as an academic field) to the majority of artists, it has been noted that some artists’ pedagogical practice has strong ties with many of the tenets of constructivism and its theories and perspectives (Buckley et al. 2008). For example, where discussion forms an important part of the learning process, many artists view themselves as co-learners (Carnell and Lodge 2002; Pringle 2002; Harding 2005) – a perception which accords with notions from socio-constructivism.
Constructivism is also preoccupied with the nature of the process whereby educators can expand their pupils' knowledge and understanding: Lev Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky described this as:

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers.
(Vygotsky 1978: 86)

Educators can aid learning by asking focused questions and through scaffolding learning, i.e. the provision of support to the learner when new concepts, skills and understandings are being introduced. Offering such structured support requires skill, as educators judge how to move from general verbal encouragement to offering specific verbal instruction and to demonstrating tasks. Scaffolding can be decreased in direct correspondence to the progress of the learner (Bruner 1986). An autonomy-support environment is one in which the teacher gives increasing responsibility to pupils.

Motivating students in school is a key priority. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has therefore placed an emphasis on differentiated approaches to learning and independent enquiry:

Personalised learning demands teaching and learning strategies that develop the competence and confidence of every learner by actively engaging and stretching them.
(DfES 2007)

Effective learners are able to think about their own thinking. This process of self-regulation, or metacognition, involves evaluating alternative approaches, refining solutions and questioning their usual responses (Capel, Leask & Turner 2005: 195). Claxton argues that learning potential can be maximised if pupils are taught how to learn, and are given opportunities to reflect on the strategies they are using in their learning (Claxton 2002). Artists, coming from outside the formal school culture, and exposing their own thinking about their practice, may be able successfully to model metacognition for pupils.

Pringle notes that the normal format of contemporary gallery learning lends itself to co-constructivist learning because participants often work together in small groups and discuss the works, rather than being given guided tours or lectures (2006). The central role of dialogue, the sharing of knowledge within a supportive learning community, the co-learning role played by the educator, and the emphasis in an experimental and open-ended process of learning make this model particularly applicable (Pringle 2008: 17). bell hooks's assertion that mutual respect is necessary for learning to take place reinforces this model (hooks 1994). Furthermore, running contrary to teacher-led models of learning, Paulo Freire, writing in his celebrated dialogical approach, calls for 'problem-posing' over 'problem-solving' in order to empower the learner (Freire 1993).

Communities of practice, communities of enquiry
The collaboration between the artists involved peer learning, supporting the notion that knowledge is a social process situated within 'communities of practice' (Wenger 1999). It is rare for artists to work in collaboration with other artists when working in educational contexts. Indeed, all the artists participating in this project had previously only worked alone when in schools.

The concept of 'communities of practice' was introduced by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger and 'has found a number of practical applications in business, organisational design, government, education, professional associations, development projects and civic life' (Lave & Wenger 1991). Although not the kinds of constituencies around which the notion was developed, communities of practice can be conceptualised in relation to artists and groupings of artists. A community of practice emerges when practitioners of whatever variety engage in joint enterprise by means of shared repertoires of discourse and behaviour (Wenger 1998), otherwise described as a 'set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice'. (Lave & Wenger 1991: 98). In an exemplary account of this Etienne Wenger focused on the informal, workplace learning of insurance clerks, observing the mutually reinforcing
repertoires of discourse, behaviour and language that emerged and evolved through day-to-day work and the interpersonal contact that it involved (1998).

According to Wenger, ‘Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.’ (Wenger 2007)

Three characteristics are crucial, as Wenger notes:

1. The domain: a community of practice is not merely a club of friends or a network of connections between people. It has an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people

2. The community: in pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other ... Unless members interact and learn together having the same job or the same title does not make for a community of practice

3. The practice: a community of practice is not merely a community of interest – people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance. Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems – in short, a shared practice. (Wenger 2007)

Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities. Wenger outlines these as:

• problem-solving – ‘Can we work on this design and brainstorm some ideas: I’m stuck’

• requests for information – ‘Where can I find the code to connect to the server?’

• seeking experience – ‘Has anyone dealt with a customer in this situation?’

• re-using assets – ‘I have a proposal for a local area network I wrote for a client last year. I can send it to you and you can easily tweak it for this new client’

• co-ordination and synergy – ‘Can we combine our purchases of solvent to achieve bulk discounts?’

• discussing developments – ‘What do you think of the new CAD system? Does it really help?’

• documentation projects – ‘We have faced this problem five times now. Let us write it down once and for all’

• visits – ‘Can we come and see your after-school programme? We need to establish one in our city’

• mapping knowledge and identifying gaps – ‘Who knows what. And what are we missing? With which other groups should we connect?’ (Wenger 2007)

Because learning is not formally structured in such contexts, learners have to invest themselves in communities of practice, and they can contribute in various interdependent ways (Wenger 1999). Communities of practice can perpetuate bad practice and stagnate, however. Developing this further, Wells notes that enquiring communities question existing practices and investigate alternative strategies (Wells 1999). This could lead to evolving practice in the communities.

Certain circumstances can help to foster a community of enquiry. Lipman argues that certain thinking dispositions are required: participants have to wonder, be critical, respect others, be inventive, seek alternatives, be inquisitive, be consistent and be committed to the self-corrective method (Lipman 2003: 164). Kirkwood elaborates on the ‘self-corrective method’: ‘Since the participants need to articulate their thoughts to communicate, this makes their patterns of thinking more salient and subject to examination.’ (Kirkwood 2004: 4)

Kirkwood’s research studies a group of teachers learning about the teaching of thinking (Kirkwood 2004). The study group she researches is concerned with finding ways to support learners in order to improve the quality of their thinking, enabling them to perform thinking tasks more skillfully. She suggests how such thinking dispositions can be developed within collaborative settings. She draws on Perkins’s view that the group needs to have ‘ability, sensitivity and inclination’ (Kirkwood 2004: 3). She suggests that participants may be sensitive to different things
when they have different backgrounds and that this inclination might be developed if people work successfully together, to generate 'greater investment in the matter at hand'. For Kirkwood, communities of enquiry need to '. . . discuss and argue, pool information ... and provide a critical check on each other's thinking.' (Kirkwood 2004: 3)

The concept and precise definitions of communities of practice become problematic when whether they can exist 'formally' is examined. One example of a formal community would be a group of engineers working on similar problems who may schedule meetings and training as part of this. An example of an informal community, on the other hand, could be a clique of pupils defining their identity in a school, or a group of nurses who meet for lunch and, without realising it, use their discussions as one of their main sources of knowledge about how to care for patients. Stephen Goulay notes that if we accept that communities define themselves (Wenger 1999: 74), it is difficult to see in what sense they might exist formally (Goulay 1999: 5). Lave contrasts communities of practice that 'exist . . . in formally defined ways' with 'informal communities of practice' (Lave 1991: 78), but does not provide examples. Goulay notes that once a community of practice becomes part of an organisation, it is difficult to see how people will experience it as being distinct from any other kind of team or meeting. He recognises that informal groups exist anyway, and that sometimes their functioning may be beneficial (indeed crucial) to intended organisational functioning. Recognising how participants experience and use such groups, therefore, he sees as crucial (Goulay personal commentary 2007). This is useful to bear in mind when considering that the artists in this study were brought together in an artificial, formally organised CPD opportunity. However, as will be seen, the artists intensified their professional and personal involvement in the group at an informal level, by communicating voluntarily with each other outside the hours of the project.

Richard Whittington notes that, 'it is through close observation and accumulating participation that practitioners learn to become full members of their community.' (Whittington 2001: 11) Under these circumstances, he argues, formal education is not important. Relating this to the project, the artists did not decide upon a formal training programme for the mentees.

It should be noted that without detailed experience of the community in question it can be difficult for outsiders fully to comprehend the language used by communities. For this reason some of the quotations which follow may at first appear opaque, but this belies the complexity, and comprehensibility to the artists, of the dialogue.

Research ethics
Ethics were of prime importance in the planning and conduct of the project, in particular because it involved human subjects. The following principles were applied:

- honesty to research staff and subjects about the purpose, methods and intended and possible uses of the research, and any risks involved
- confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and anonymity of respondents
- independence and impartiality of researchers as regards the subject of the research. The project was managed in accordance with Newcastle University's Code of Good Practice in Research (4) and the British Sociological Association Ethical Guidelines and the Market Research Society Code of Conduct (5)

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Planning meetings were held before each day's session, and reflection meetings were held afterwards. Initially the researcher kept comments to a minimum to minimise the possibility of leading participants in their reflections. The main features of non-directive interview are the minimal direction or control exhibited by the interviewer, and the freedom the respondent has to express her subjective feelings as fully and as spontaneously as she chooses or is able (Cohen 1994: 273). Moser and Kalton comment further:

The interviewer confines himself to elucidating doubtful points, rephrasing the respondent's answers, and to probing generally. It is an approach especially to be recommended when complex attitudes are involved and when one's knowledge of them is still in a vague and unstructured form. (Moser & Kalton 1977)
It was felt appropriate to use this form whilst lines of enquiry were uniformed.

In the second half of the project, once participants and the researcher were clearer about aspects of pedagogy that they wanted to pursue, the researcher took a more active role in prompting and guiding discussions, using more focused interviews:

In the focused interview, however, the interviewer can, when expedient, play a more active role; he can introduce more explicit verbal cues to the stimulus pattern or even represent it. In either case this usually activates a concrete report of responses by informants.

(Merton & Kendall 1946)

Whilst they were teaching, participants' speech was recorded using microphones connected to digital recorders. It was felt that this would be a useful way of investigating the complex nature of pedagogical practice, as the artists would be able to explain their reasoning behind tasks, or capture their immediate response to classroom interactions. It also gave them a certain amount of autonomy and control over the data gathered for the research project. In practice, however, the artists often forgot to turn on the microphones while they were concentrating on teaching.

The digital recordings were transcribed and coded using NVivo, software for handling qualitative data. The categories (nodes) which emerged were:

• technical skill-sharing
• pedagogical skill-sharing
• pedagogy
• critical reflection
• constructive criticism
• failings
• successes
• individual learning styles
• pupil relationships
• school/teacher relationship
• attitude to school
• role in education
• role of education
• arts practice

It should be noted that due to the qualitative nature of the data, the coding is dependent on the researchers' essentially subjective judgements. However, the researchers' independent codings of the data were substantially congruent.

In the second half of the project the artists' teaching was recorded on video for use in stimulated-recall interviews (Calderhead 1981). This methodology requires teachers to explicate their thoughts in response to a video recording of a lesson they have just taught. This is regarded as an appropriate method for interactive studies, in which teachers are able to reflect on their teaching practices by 're-living' their lesson.

It was decided that this methodology should be adopted by the artists mentoring each other, as it parallels the work of Meijer et al. (2002) work in teacher education, where the practical knowledge of experienced teachers was employed in the mentoring of student teachers – in stimulated-recall sessions. Here the tool enabled: (a) structured sessions between a student teacher and her/his mentor teacher; (b) student teachers to analyse the practical knowledge of an experienced teacher; and (c) student teachers to explain and reflect on their own practical knowledge (Meijer 2002 p.408).

During the planning meeting at the start of the day, the mentees each chose a specific area of their practice that they wanted to explore: how they would deal with pupil questions, for example, or how they might motivate certain pupils. The mentees were filmed throughout the day, and, before the stimulated-recall discussion, the researcher selected a small amount of footage to help to illustrate this chosen aspect of their practice. All the participants watched the footage, and this prompted discussion. The way that the mentee artists identified an area for development, and collectively investigated how change could be effected, follows the action research model defined by the London cluster in enquire phase 1:
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Our report is not typical of action research in that the action researchers are not themselves responsible for the findings and recommendations. Rather they have been responsible for the construction of a specific pedagogic discourse that has formed the object (pedagogic conditions and relations) for analysis and has in turn informed the findings. (Addison & Burgess 2006: 47)

Further (non-participant) observations were made of the activities in which the pupils engaged and used as data for the research.

Data was also collected from the email correspondence between the artists in order to capture what they were doing outside the hours of the project, and to note the social and professional interaction to which the project had led. NVivo was not employed to analyse this data set because the data set was not large enough.

It is also important to clarify that the data analysis findings cannot be generalised, given the small number of subjects involved in the research. However, it can be stated that subjects’ responses and/or actions indicate possibilities within specific circumstances, in a way similar to the emphasis of some qualitative research on possible social practices rather than on universally generalisable data (Peräkylä 2004).

Discussion of findings
This section discusses the findings relating to each of the research questions in turn.

What pedagogical models are utilised by the artists and what sorts of outcomes are intended?

The intended outcomes differed between the different artists and changed over time. None of the artists was as concerned with teaching technical or practical skills as with facilitating conceptual thinking skills.

At the beginning of the project, during the first planning meeting, mentees were predictably more anxious about practical considerations:

CS: … if there’s going to be sort of issues if all kids don’t have permission slips, and then we can’t have cameras present in the room anyway, then it’s quite hard to make a filmmaking project with that.

One mentor was interested in learning more about video art himself, but also in motivating the pupils to do so:

JQ: I mean there’s things going on here about us chatting and sharing what we do, and how we do it, and why we do it, but also including them [i.e. the students] in that. We’re not going in to teach them how to make video art as such; we’re going in to get them involved or engaged with how we do it and why we do it … and I think it’s also like a personal thing of figuring out what we’re going to get out it personally. Mine is probably looking at how different people use film, make stuff, how you put it out there, that kind of stuff that I’m, you know, probably not as familiar with as you three.

One mentor found forming a dialogue central to her own artistic practice, and specifically prioritised developing pupils’ thinking skills over technical knowledge:

KR: … I’m more, maybe, just the other way around. I’m more interested in how you can actually work with other people, and share knowledge and do a project … I’m far more interested in them learning thinking skills and making the work that they want to make and not [being] limited by way of the technology.

From observation, all the artists’ pedagogical practices intuitively reflected aspects of socio-constructivist learning theories, as the artists were keen to use the students’ knowledge, instead of offering didactic instruction. One comment demonstrated that Kelly was aware of the challenges of applying this kind of approach, which accords with constructivist approaches to learning:

KR: … on the one hand you want to make suggestions because you want to offer alternatives to the way they’re thinking about things, so they’re building a repertoire of ideas and considerations for what they’re trying to get across, but on the other you don’t want to – or I feel I don’t want to make suggestions that in some ways direct it into something that
<table>
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<td>ISIS Arts</td>
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<td>ISIS Arts</td>
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<td>BALTIC, Centre for Contemporary Art and the Hatton Art Gallery</td>
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<td>Observation of visit</td>
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| Blyth Community College | 06.03.07   | Pre-planning and reflection meetings, stimulated-recall discussion, observation of activity | Stimulated-recall topic  
- how he gives greater responsibility to the students; how he communicates; how she develops critical thinking with the group |
| Blyth Community College | 13.03.07   | Pre-planning and reflection meetings; stimulated-recall discussion; observation of activity | Stimulated-recall topic  
- how he motivates less-engaged students  
- how she develops students' ideas |
| Blyth Community College | 20.03.07   | Pre-planning and reflection meetings, stimulated-recall discussion, observation of activity | Stimulated-recall topic  
- how you get students to develop/advance further in their work  
- how you facilitate their critiquing work |
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would be more me than them initially. So it's a really hard line to walk, because you could choose not to make the suggestions at all, but then they don't see all these other ways that you can communicate the idea ...

The mentor described how she had adopted strategies to enable this:

KR: I try and do that a lot. I try and ask a lot of questions: how, you know, is it? – what kind of pace is it going to be? Is it? – lots of questions to get them to think about those things without being leading, because you don't want to be the author of the work.

Here, the mentor suggested talking to the students about their ideas, breaking down the component parts of the film to enable them to be realised. By asking them to consider each aspect of the film, for example, the sound or the colour, she hoped that they would carefully consider whether the means they were using would convey their intended message. The mentor's intuition and educational experience made her realise that students are easily led by the expert, especially perhaps, because they were not that familiar with video art. She was conscious of making them decide, and control the decisions behind their films. In this way, she was avoiding Sekules's description of the artist as artisan–craftworker, and was instead working as a creative facilitator (Sekules 2003).

During one particular exercise, the mentee felt that he ended up taking too much control of the filming:

BJ: ... I ended up more or less directing it, because I was using the camera; she didn't want to use the camera, so I said 'Okay, I'll use the camera; you get everyone to line up and do what they have to do.' And I ended up more or less telling them how to do it. I thought she should be doing that. But because of time and because – you just want to get it [done] ...

This particular mentee decided to 'stretch' a group of relatively reticent students (i.e. extend their achievement potential) over the next few sessions. During the first half of the project the group in question appeared to have low levels of motivation and had not produced a finished film. At first he was satisfied that they were engaged enough to produce a film:

BJ: ... they had an idea, which I don't think they had last time ... I kind of think it was good just to get them to film something and then get it straight onto the computer. I don't know whether, if I'd just take[n] control and done everything ... they'd have been as interested, but they seemed interested, 'cause they were making the decisions.

However, the film that the students produced did not address the theme of 'contrast' and was judged in discussions between the artists not to be as sophisticated as other groups' films (although the artists did not formally assess the films). Whilst this group produced a representational film of each other walking down the corridor as if it were a fashion catwalk, other groups took their initial ideas further, either using technical effects to make symbolic representations (draining a tree of colour, for example, to comment on environmental catastrophe), or using colour and sound to explore the contrasting environments of the school. Despite the quality of the finished film, BJ's mentor praised his approach, and made an argument for this way of teaching:

KR: ... giving credit to that process ... of allowing for that play, because it's a totally viable way of making work. I think as artists we sometimes forget that there's a lot of experimentation, there's a lot of play, and that's what ... got them engaged with it. Whether or not it ended up being successful is not actually the point.

It proved difficult to judge how much support to provide while working with this particular group of students. Too much could steer students too strongly, while too little could leave them without direction. The other artists noted the tensions involved in encouraging independent work:

Interviewer: If you were to keep on working with that particular group – you've got them engaged – how would you ... stretch them to get the most out of them creatively?

BJ: I might have to get a bit harder on them – not harder, but you know ... say to them the initial idea was about light and darkness ... and it has changed to something different ... now you've got an idea of how to use a computer ... I don't if they – or how they'd react, but yeah ...
CS: But I guess that’s the fine line you have to have in mind [when working] with a group like that, because ... you want to sort of be hard or firm or ... but then you don’t want to discourage; you don’t want to say what you really think about work or, you just want that - to go that extra ...  

KR: Also maybe they as a group decided actually they weren’t really interested in their original idea, and I think that respect has to be given to that, because often – I’ve done that before, where I’ll think of something and then realise actually, it’s rubbish.

Capel et al. endorse ‘setting tasks which are challenging but achievable for each individual pupil’, an idea also present in Csikszentmihalyi’s autotelic theory of the self (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi 1988). Here one condition for learners to achieve a state of ‘flow’ is absorption in an heuristic task which is both appropriately possible and appropriately challenging, where impossible or unchallenging tasks lead to anxiety and boredom respectively, and thus to disengagement. Furthermore, ‘... pupils are motivated by teachers who know, support, challenge and encourage them to act independently from each other and from the teacher.’ (Capel, Leask & Turner 2005: 125)

Capel et al. note how the DfES have placed a greater emphasis on a differentiated approach to learning and independent enquiry. To achieve effective teaching and learning, the DfES has highlighted a personalised learning approach:

Personalised learning demands teaching and learning strategies that develop the competence and confidence of every learner by actively engaging and stretching them. (DfES 2007)

Ben’s mentor offered suggestions for how to develop the group’s thinking:

KR: I was going to say that maybe the next step after that would be to get them to identify what got them charged about working in that particular way. Okay, the light and dark thing - has that been thrown out? That’s fine, if it has been, but what led them into that idea, and where can they go from here?

The mentee recognised that he had been in a similar position with his own work before:

BJ: ... you might shoot this most amazing footage, but just because it’s amazing, it might not be relevant to the piece of work that you’re using it for, that you’re making. So therefore it’s hard to get of that footage, isn’t it? And you have to kind of think it’s not relevant, and that’s a very important thing to learn, I think, when you are first making art: that sometimes you do have to just get the things that you love but you have to get rid of them.

The artists often used their own experience as artists to place themselves in the position of learner and empathise with the difficulties faced by the students. In keeping with the findings of Addison and Burgess for the previous enquire project, the artists were ‘question[ing] both assumptions about the students’ habituated ways of learning’ (Addison & Burgess 2006: 46).

Reflecting Bruner’s writing on scaffolding, the artists noted that learning was successful when they were able to withdraw support, encourage students to work independently and take ownership of their learning (Bruner 1986). From watching the filmed footage of each other teaching, they felt that scaffolding students’ learning through questioning and gradually withdrawing support had enabled them to develop their work. In the following example, John and Cecilia explain how they motivated an able and engaged student to expand her original ideas (using stimulated recall). In Cecilia’s words, ‘[we] both felt that she’d got a bit narrow in her one idea, that we just wanted to kind of loosen her up a little bit, kind of present her, or get her – encourage her in a way to think about different possibilities with this different work.’

Initially, Cecilia felt that the student was asking for permission and reassurance from the artists, partly because of a lack of confidence. Therefore, she had to encourage her, whilst pushing her to develop the work further:

CS: ... she also kept asking ‘Can I do this, can I do that? Or should I do – should I film it first in the red light or should I first film it in the light?’ she was very kind of ... well, what I felt about her was that she really needed to get back into the work and get a sort of confidence, and that she didn’t just need patting her on the head and saying, ‘Oh well done you’ve done something.’
The video footage showed the student coming up with lots of questions and suggestions in quick succession:

JQ: ... watching that, it's quite interesting just the pace, and that's the what I got from her: that she's very fast, and she's always trying to finish what you're saying and she's like doing this 'How I'm supposed to do this and what's that and they got a grid, can I get a grid? [she was wanting to adapt a grid-like formation used in a Gilbert and George piece] Can I do that?' ... And I felt watching that we'd just get a space, and you'd suggested yeah, you could have your squares and we could do these overlays, and kept feeding her stuff. And also it gave her space just to run, and run out of steam with it, and then, you know, then hang it around — she recognised that they had the word, the title, and then just after that she went off and watched her stuff, picked out the key phrases...

Initially the artists scaffolded the student's progress by offering praise and asking questions about key concepts behind the work. They offered some practical suggestions, such as using a grid format. They listened intently to her ideas, and interrupted at key points — for example, asking her to show them the Gilbert and George piece that has influenced her. As the student came up with more possibilities, they did not comment directly on them, allowing the student to refine them herself. After this discussion, the artists were pleased that she did refine her idea without any further input from them.

This example suggests that the artists have managed to provide an autonomy-support environment, as described by Capel et al.:

An autonomy-support environment is one in which the teacher gives increasing responsibility to pupils, e.g. for choices/options about what they want to do; encourages pupils' decision-making by spending less time talking, more time listening, making less directive comments, asking more questions, and not giving pupils solutions; allows pupils to work in their own way; offers more praise and verbal approval in class.
(Capel, Leask & Turner 2005; Flink, Boggiano & Barrett 1990; Manouchehri 2004)

Referring to different concepts of knowledge, as set out in the theoretical frameworks section (see above), both mentors articulated the difficulties associated with teaching art. Obviously the practical skill involved in using the cameras is one aspect, but one artist described challenging the students' tacit knowledge about art theory as her greatest challenge:

KR: ... the difficulty is in prying open the thinking around what art is, having them wrapping their heads around the — just the kind of infinite possibilities really, and also the consideration of territory that hasn't been investigated by people. So it's kind of very difficult — it's an abyss, and it's — often people are very structured in their thinking about their opinions of things, especially art and what it can be and — yeah, it's prying all that open. So I think it's almost kind of undoing a lot of the conditioning that's been done before we meet them. That's what I would describe as the most difficult.

The following assertion from another artist seems to reinforce the assumption of Barth et al. that peers serve as significant reinforcing and models of behaviour, especially in early adolescence — based on educational and child clinical theories of social abilities and grouping (Barth et al. 2004):

JQ: I think the trend, the stream they're in, is to go — I mean, artists don't see the world like everyone else, or they try and give their subjective view of it, whereas even these students, their whole stuff is about trying to be like everybody else, or think we all agree that this is good and that's bad, or they're kind of trying to — and so we're trying to stop them doing actually what they actually want to do.

This also echoes Mezirow's observation that individuals tend to filter new experiences through existing structures and reinforce existing constructs in order either to avoid anxiety or conform to peer group expectations (Mezirow 1991: 1). Paul R. Martin's research into learning in adult education in the discipline of Fine Art makes similar assertions. He observes that, 'a significant barrier to learning for mature students is the extent to which established perceptions, values and beliefs can filter and block their ability to transform their understanding of the world in which they live.' (Martin 2001: 1) He describes how learners and some teachers view art as a philosophically unproblematic process which recreates a culturally agreed visual representation of reality by using various techniques:
However, much of the teaching of Fine Art is premised on challenging students' views in order to enable them to explore the relationship between humanity and its content and to express new perceptions of this relationship through a variety of visual means. Therefore it is necessary to be able to unlearn as well as learn as part of the process of studying fine art.

(Martin, 2001: 1)

With regard to Shulman’s teaching knowledges, both mentors demonstrated pedagogical content knowledge which ‘includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult’. Furthermore, their awareness of the challenges of teaching art echoes (and perhaps help to define) how they perceive their role. They were committed to making individuals think independently, perhaps not in keeping with the formal education system. This accords with Pringle’s notion of the artist as ‘social activist’ (Pringle 2002).

The four different artists all came with different experiences of art education and, unsurprisingly, had distinct approaches to teaching. The delivery of the sessions differed. One mentor worked closely with individuals:

KR: Yeah, definitely. I recommend, and this is just something that I personally really like doing … spending time with each of them by themselves, just chatting, not as a group, but having a one-on-one conversation, and adding any kind of support, even if it’s just, ‘I’m insecure about my idea.’

All the artists had an understanding of individual learning styles, based on intuition and experience, and commented on there being no ‘catch-all’ way of engaging with all the students.

By the second half of the project, the artists had developed relationships with pupils. Consequently, they tailored strategies to suit individuals and their preferred learning styles. When trying to stretch brighter students, they interrogated them further, whilst letting less confident students work with their friends in groups. One of the mentees decided to focus on the sound element of videos because one student, who was perceived as wayward and lazy, had a lot of expertise in this area. Here the mentor describes the process of making this pupil articulate his ideas, and being more forceful than he would be with another pupil:

JQ: It does take time, and it takes time actually doing stuff to figure it out: like [X], you know, today, was going to go home and find his pictures, and I just said ‘no, you have to do it today, you have to do it now.’ But it was good because he finally did, even though it was last-minute; [inaudible] brings them in, you know. Otherwise it would have been next week and … it’s just funny how different people, just what little spurs they need.

One of the artists discussed with the students how they liked to work, after having first discussed what she had wanted them to gain from a particular exercise. This could be seen as encouraging the learner to become metacognitively aware (Shayer & Adey 2002; Claxton 2002; Capel, Leask & Turner 2005).

KR: … And then that led into discussions about learning, and one of them had said that … she found that the environment that best supported her learning experience was to have chats … like group discussions and to verbalise everything, and that was [X]. And [Y] said that she’s the opposite, that she has to sink into her own mind to work out her own thoughts before she can share them.

In summary, there is clear evidence that pedagogical models were co-constructivist. Artists used scaffolding to develop individual thinking, and encouraged students to become metacognitively aware. The mentors were aware of the difficulties of their subject, demonstrating pedagogical-content knowledge.

**In what ways has the experience of skill-sharing had an impact on the artists in terms of their attitudes to pedagogy, to art and to young people?**

All the artists had different levels and types of technical skills and varying experiences of different software packages. One of the mentors learnt from watching his mentee use an editing software package; he developed his skills within a linear editing suite and learnt how to edit sound. Email correspondence revealed Kelly forwarding a link to an internet site that she had found useful when learning how to design websites. But although the artists shared technical skills, they were far more concerned with sharing pedagogical strategies.
The two mentors seemed to offer different types of support. One of the mentees summed up the different approaches, and why it had been useful for her to work with someone who worked against her natural instincts:

CS: ...Kelly, [you] are much more structured and probably the way that I would probably approach something, and John, you have a much more responsive kind of way, which I've also found very good. It's probably more useful for me to be with you, because it's sort of made me more relaxed in my approach.

From discussions relatively early on in the project, it is apparent that this support had increased Cecilia's confidence and reduced her anxieties. She described how John had not panicked when the video recorder did not work, and had used the opportunity instead to talk to the students. She felt that he was an excellent communicator, continually relating the video art which the students were producing to their own lives. Following on, the mentor described that whilst Cecilia had been concentrating on editing the students' film, he had been trying to ensure that she was kept in the conversation:

CS: I think your kind of timing and your experience of things never working properly, and the fact that we might have to change room quickly was quite valuable for me ... I think where I've started to learn from John is the way where he's very good in continuing the conversation and making sure it continues.

JQ: I see that as guiding and provoking. I think I've seen myself do that with you as well, to see how to link up your interests and your discussion so it does link with them ... what I've thought I've done today is keep them in the game of trying to discuss what they're trying to do and why they're trying to do it; question them and provoke them into stuff. And to feed you into that as well, 'cause you did get into the operating [Cecilia was editing the film footage], and my job was to keep you in the discussion and keep you adding into that, and keeping the door open for you to do that same thing, to put your provocation into them, like when you said stuff like 'what about if we do it like this?' Then that makes them go 'Oh no, no' and the 'Oh yeah'...

The mentor felt that such conversations provoked thought, and that in inviting Cecilia to engage in the discussion, she could offer the students further possibilities.

The other mentee was impressed by one of the exercises his mentor gave the students and decided to try it out for himself. Having shown examples of her films, Kelly had asked the students to imagine that they were her, and to produce ideas for another film that she could make. This involved the students understanding and then applying the key visual and theoretical themes that characterised her work. She had already discussed with the students how the artworks were open to multiple interpretations, and felt that this task reinforced this. Kelly felt the exercise was successful because, in order to produce something 'in the style of', the students were required to understand and interrogate the work fully. This particular task had been an experiment, and the mentor explained her rationale behind it:

KR: But asking them to put themselves in – to try to imagine if they were me and what would they make – was really a kind of effort to see how much they had received from the artist's talk and the work, and how individual their perceptions were to that as well. 'Cause we talked about the fact that there are so many readings with art that this was another way of displaying them. And then I had them tell each other, present to the group, what they had conceived of if they had made a video in their imagination. And this is the realisation that came out of it: that their conceiving of work in that way communicated to me that they understood it on a much, I'd say, deeper level than they would have been able to had they explained to me what they understood about the work.

This particular example illustrates skill-sharing on a few levels. Firstly, the mentee was able to see a novel exercise put into practice. Secondly, the fact that his mentor explained the reasoning behind the task allowed the mentee to learn more than if he had just replicated the task.

In summary, the perceived charisma, confidence and responsive adaptability of one mentor provided overarching reinforcement for his mentee. In this way, using Sekules's definition, the mentor could be viewed as acting as a celebrity performer. The other
mentor provided a more structured approach by making suggestions for innovative exercises and tasks and then gradually withdrawing support. The first approach is particularly reliant on the individual's personality; it would be easier, therefore, to replicate the second approach in other educational projects. Also, the fact that this approach enabled the mentee to lead the second half of the project may have prepared him more fully for developing future educational projects on his own.

The mentees were able to explain the thinking behind their pedagogical strategies using stimulated recall as a tool; it also offered the mentors a chance to offer constructive criticism. The following extract illustrates how the video, unusually, enabled the artists to consider their physical presence, and see how they arranged the session spatially. This session occurred halfway through the project, after the mentee had used advice from the teacher gained on the CPD day to help to break down tasks. Ben had asked the group to discuss the visit to Baltic and had provided leaflets to stimulate conversation. He had allowed them to talk amongst themselves for a few minutes before joining in:

JQ: ... and then you joined them, that was quite a crucial thing about how we ought to ... organise space to allow people to chat and things, and get ourselves in there.

BJ: I think I was thinking about what [X – the teacher] said about short, sharp activities ... so I thought well, leave them for five minutes [inaudible] themselves, kind of throw the information on the table and leave them to it, and then come in a bit later and say ...  

JQ: That's right, and then you came round and joined them on the table. That was a good thing to do.

Skill-transfer throughout the project was a two-way process. The mentor who was used to making films with individuals was pleasantly surprised when she followed her mentee's plan, and found it much easier working with a group to make a film.

There was also recognition of the fact that the four different artists, because of individual predispositions, would teach differently. Therefore, rather than imposing pedagogical frameworks on individuals, Kelly felt that it was important for the students to encounter different approaches:

KR: I realised after working with [Ben] that your suggestions won't be my suggestions, or your way of trying to get them to think, and this is just natural, everybody would be like this ... So my suggestions might open them up so much, but actually working with another artist would open them up more in some other directions. That's kind of a realisation ... In the future I'm going to try to challenge myself more to see through different artists' eyes, [laughs] if that's possible.

In summary, the two mentors offered different types of support. One deliberately decided against offering structured support through lesson plans (personal commentary), providing a more responsive approach instead. The other of the artists was more structured in her support, leading the first half of the sessions before her mentee took over. The artists felt that both approaches had merit, and that there was not a prescriptive model of training that would work in similar situations; the second approach, however, would be easier to replicate. Both mentees appreciated the support, and felt that the adaptive nature of the project had enabled them to develop their confidence. Using stimulated recall as a tool was felt by the artists to be the most effective way of improving their pedagogical skills.

**In what ways has the experience of the activity had an impact on the artists in terms of their attitudes to pedagogy, to art and to young people?**

In the first half of the project, while the artists were getting to know the pupils, they found that incidental conversations actually guided the work produced:

CS: I think I only mentioned [racism] once when I did my talk, but then a lot of them picked up on that, didn't they? And we had a big discussion about politics and racism. And then when they did your exercise, I think two or three of them did do work about politics, or George Bush, or America or ...  

JQ: ... because we were chatting about what they might like to do. One of the girls was asking if she could do it about global warming and all this kind of stuff, and we started to talk about that, about what it meant, and you could see others beginning to go ...
Here, the needs and interests of students might be said to be related to the concerns of artists (Burgess 2006: 46). In fact, the artists were arguably taking this further, by inviting the students to investigate projects based on their own interests, rather than imposing a problem on them. This demonstrates a ‘problem-posing’ as opposed to a ‘problem-solving’ approach, as proposed by Freire (1993). Here, the boundaries between teacher and student dissolve and all parties become co-investigators:

Students, as they are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world, will feel increasingly challenged and obliged to respond to that challenge.

(Freire 1993: 68)

The following extract illustrates how a discussion about their own artistic practice was related back by the artists to their teaching:

KR: It's in the blurring line between reality and imaginary reality and fantasy, really, that we are now living in a very ...

JQ: Post-real is the phrase that I heard.

KR: ... post-real world where everything is blurred ... at the very least blurred.

BJ: Slavoj Z'ížek's writing ...

KR: Yeah, he's the only person that I have read that ...

BJ: I've read quite a few on ...

KR: If you can think of anything ...

BJ: In my point of view, or to my mind, it's kind of vague writing which I can relate to. A lot of my work is about that.

BJ: It's just that it's interesting ... that there are loads of signs or even allusions in some people's writing or exhibitions that are pointing towards it, but no one [is] fully articulating this -- I don't know if it's a dilemma or just a situation or what it is. A climate? We'll call it a climate, which relates to our second-life world of work ...

CS: Discussion this morning. [laughs]

KR: It also relates to our conversation with the kids – students, we'll call them – last week about editing and the power of editing and editorial news coverage, but the power that the editors have over what you're going to take over, an apparently real unbiased approach. Nothing is truly unbiased.

The artists described themes underlying their work, discussed similarities, and suggested to one another critical thinkers whose work might help to formulate their ideas. The participants were noticeably animated during this discussion, and as a result suggested establishing an artists’ group that would critique, discuss and explain work in progress. They felt that the project had provided them with an invaluable opportunity to do this:

KR: ... there's such a great deal of pressure on artists to articulate themselves, whether they're good at it or not, both by way of writing and also in artist's talks and lectures and discussions, and that sort of thing. So I think that I'm personally grateful when I come across someone else who's thinking about similar ideas that can help to articulate or offer some kind of language.

The artists explored the difference between their own artistic practice and their educational practice:

JQ: ... what do people mean when they say 'arts practice'? ... that's kind of where I'm focusing my enquiry ... when I hear you say it, and we talk about it, I'm trying to unpick what it is; is it the way we work, the ideas we have, the slant we have, the perception we're trying to express, or the political slant, the aesthetic, the quirkiness; is it because it refers to somebody else's work; is it different to somebody else's work?

For one artist, educational work provided an income which allowed her to spend as much time as possible in her studio, while another did not see a distinction between pedagogical and artistic practice because, for her, both fed into each other. One of the mentees, who had previously seen education as a way to gain additional funding, felt the project reaffirmed the purpose of art education as a means of stimulating students to think about their world differently:
BJ: I think I've had this for quite a while since I became an artist, and I had to start applying for funding. There's always what's the education aspect, as if you only get the funding if there's an educational aspect – so I've always had a problem with the fact that someone just sticks on an educational thing … and it's not really benefiting anyone apart from the fact that they then get their money, and the kids or whoever, the elderly people or whoever, don't get anything from it. Which is why I've always kind of – until very, very recently, over the last two years – stayed away from doing educational work, because I've never really understood or tried to figure out in my own head why I'd do it … In the past I have worked and worked with people and I just thought it was either for their own practice, and nothing to do with actually working with the kids, or it was just because they had to do it, so they came up with something really simple. And I was working with [inaudible] and the kids were saying 'Why are we doing this, why are we doing this?' and I couldn't answer them, 'cause I didn't know why. There was no educational reason behind it; it was just to keep them busy for an hour or something … But then in the last couple of years I began to think about, well, why not get involved in education? And that's why I got in contact with the ISIS Arts Scheme, and I'm doing this.

JQ: Has that changed what you think now?

BJ: Yeah, definitely.

JQ: But to ask you your question, why is it important?

BJ: It comes back to when we first met up to talk about this project, when I was thinking that it's not just about art, it's not just about teaching them art, teaching how to draw, teaching them how to use a camera, it's about – or it should be about – talking about different subjects that are related to art, so it could be social or political, their issues, their beliefs, and trying to get them thinking about it through making art.

Again, this seems to suggest that the artist views himself as a social activist (Pringle 2002).

In a similar vein, the following copy of an email correspondence demonstrates how the artists planned sessions practically, made suggestions, and discussed their arts practice:

Hi

Have managed to sort out the films for the next session, just need to think about sound but will get in touch with you nearer the time, as well as picking up equipment.

I have been chatting with a friend of mine, X, about setting up an informal discussion group for artists to 'show and tell'. Nothing major, just a chance for people to talk about new work or proposals in an informal but critical space. Would you be interested? I'll ask CS and JQ too. X lives in Gateshead so it makes things easier in that respect.

I was also wondering if you could tell me about the exhibition that you are showing in which you talked about at the last session. Was it in Washington? I am interested as it seems its looking into ideas that are similar to my work.

Hi Ben,

Good to hear that you've sorted out your films. I still have to do that for the next session. I've been chatting with JQ and we think that it's a good idea that the group come back together on this last day this term to show their work to the whole group to get a better feel of what everyone has been up to – even if it's unfinished. The quick chats at the end of the day haven't really been working to connect the class so this might help. We might want to give them an hour or so to do this at the end of the day. So we'll have to be fast in editing with the students. What I have done in the past is figure out how much time I have and divided it equally to start with (knowing that some would be faster, some longer) and played it by ear with that time allotted to each student in mind. The day needs to be quite structured to be fair to the students.

I've been thinking that with the next group – perhaps you should think of something that you would have done with them if I were not around. We have ended up doing what I kind of normally do with them and I think it's good for you to be part of that in terms of learning from what I do – but also, having a chance and support to do your thing is pretty crucial as well – both for the mentoring aspect of the project and for the skills-sharing. So, how about I offer my support for you to lead the group in a 'BJ' activity for the next group?
Regarding the informal ‘idea’ group, yes, I would be interested. Thank you for asking!

Yes, the exhibition is at the Hirshhorn in Washington, DC. [http://hirshhorn.si.edu/... There is a brief description already posted on their website under upcoming exhibitions but here is a longer version they sent along.

You mentioned in our quick group chat about this that you’d come across essays / critical thinkers ruminating on this subject – can you remember which pieces of writing these were ...? In my research, I’ve found very little – so anything you think would be useful would be appreciated. Also, ... if you’ve found anything written about the blurring of reality lines with respect to the landscape (which is arguably the base ‘reality’ underpinning all other forms) I’d be very interested.

Speak soon,

Kelly

The artists developed an open, professional relationship where they felt that they could discuss aspects of the project that were not working well. As a strategy to help the mentee to develop, the mentor described how she had devised sessions in the past, and there was also a cross-fertilisation of ideas regarding their own art. In this way, the artists could be seen to be acting as researchers (Pringle 2002). This email correspondence suggests that the artists had the ability, sensitivity and inclination to develop thinking dispositions (improving the quality of their thinking, enabling them to perform thinking tasks more skilfully) within a collaborative setting (Perkins 2001; Kirkwood 2004). In this way, the artists invested themselves in a community of enquiry. The act of reflection seems to have informed their pedagogical practices:

BJ: I think it’s been good to hear someone say ‘So why did you do that?’ ... In the past you would have just done it and not thought – ‘I dunno, just did it, I don’t know why I did it, but I did it ...’

The experience of the activity seemed to reinforce at a profound level all the artists’ perceptions of their role in schools. It cemented their belief in their distinct non-establishment role, even though they recognised the difficulties associated with this. They commented on not being teachers and consequently not having a sense of authority over pupils: one artist, for example, explained how it was a particular student’s choice whether he left a session. The artists felt that the students had had to adjust to being treated as adults and individual thinkers, and constantly asked for reassurance in carrying their ideas forward:

KR: ... it was really good for me to see how relaxed everyone was by the second term, and how comfortable they were, all of a sudden, with working on their own and working through their own ideas and not having to be told what to do every second of the day. And I really feel like now is the point where they could really, really get into it and make their own real work, [laughs] but this is the point where we have to leave them of course.

Although, at the teacher’s request, they had tailored the theme of the project to ‘contrast’, the artists felt that this had restricted the students:

KR: Yeah, that’s the whole literal thing of contrast, A then B, or one plus one is two, instead of going A, D, Z and that kind of thinking process. Actually you can make anything fit contrast.

They noted how art is taught differently at school and art college, and one expressed a feeling that the more interesting and exploratory work in the project students’ sketchbooks might unfortunately not receive good assessment marks. She also noted that she, as a working artist, felt it was necessary to reject the training she had received:

CS: It’s that thing about having to unlearn a lot of things about being in school, ’cause then, when you become an adult ... your opinion is the thing that’s going to drive you forward or your free thinking.
This echoes Martin’s research that, ‘meaning making needs to become a continual process of re-evaluation, and to achieve this, individuals will have to continually unlearn to learn.’ (Martin 2001: 1) She recognised that intelligent students could get by without their work being interrogated:

CS: … you have to unlearn a lot of things to start thinking, and thinking about art, and thinking about making art, and they’re just so kind of – in a one way they just kind of know what to do, how to get by in a school environment, and they’re really clever, they are clever … but the kind of to get them to be able to let that down a little bit and start making mistakes that they can learn from, and instead of just letting them get on with the work…

The other artists reiterated similar views, suggesting that they followed Pringle’s definition of an artist as a social activist (Pringle 2002):

JQ: … we bring otherness, adults who are – we’re in a different stream; we’re running down a different path to most adults that they will be in contact with.

BJ: … I mean, it doesn’t really matter what end result they have – if they’ve done films or whatever – but you know, we made them somehow think about these things that we think about in their own way.

Although the artists felt that the school curriculum restricted creativity, and previous comments suggested that they wanted an unstructured approach, they felt that a greater understanding of how the students worked in school would help to ease the contrast in teaching approaches:

JQ: … if I was doing this again I would want to know more about how they worked beforehand, because I realise now how structured and how … ‘prescriptive’ their work is, and going in with – just getting them to make videos with an open plan, it’s probably just way too much. That’s probably what I’ve learnt from it.

BJ: I kind of wonder if it would be a good idea … that if you went into a class and sat with them in a class, with [X] or whoever taking them, just see them taught in a teaching way, so you know how they’re being taught.

One of the mentees felt that the experience had changed their attitude to young people:

BJ: Young people: they might ask, ‘What’s that?’, but it seems that they’re interested and they actually want to know the answer … So I think it shows that there are young people, sixteen- or seventeen-year-olds, who are actually – who have things to say, have ideas and know how to – and art, I suppose, is a way, hopefully, of expressing those ideas.

Following on from this, the respect the artists had shown to the young people seemed to have encouraged the students to articulate their opinions:

KR: Did you get? – because I do get the feeling off them that it’s like a big relief to be able to actually have conversations about life …

They discussed career options with the students and these conversations about personal concerns seem to have increased the sense of collaboration that lay behind the project. In this way the artists have unconsciously been using bell hooks’s idea that respect is needed to optimise learning conditions.

In summary, discussions arising from the students’ interests developed relationships between artist and student and ultimately guided the work that they produced. The artists felt that discussions during the reflection meetings about contemporary art and their own practice helped to clarify their role as agents of change, or social activists (Pringle 2002). They articulated the gulf between art and how it is taught in school, and recognised the demands this placed on the students during the project.
Conclusions

The artists intuitively used socio-constructivist learning theories and adapted their teaching strategies to suit individual learning styles. They were all interested in enabling students to think independently and the scaffolding ensured that students could justify the decisions behind their work. By asking students how they liked to learn, they were encouraging them to become metacognitively aware, thus developing their learning further. Capel et al. assert that pupils are motivated by teachers who know, support, challenge and encourage them to act independently from each other and from the teacher (Capel, Leask & Turner 2005).

The artists shared pedagogical strategies and used stimulated response as a tool to offer each other constructive criticism. They also recognised the importance of the different teaching approaches and experiences that they each brought to the project, and felt this added to the richness of the learning for the students.

Using stimulated recall as a research tool was particularly revealing, and all the artists commented that this aspect had been the most useful in helping them to develop their educational practice. The video footage helped to develop one artist’s pedagogical strategies: having watched the video one week, he felt that he had not pushed the pupils far enough in developing their work, but, as a direct result, he decided to focus on how he was going to do this.

Meeting in an informal discursive environment fostered relationships between the artists. The mentors and mentees developed close working relationships. The mentors were supportive, and gradually withdrew as the mentees became more confident. So, the artists scaffolded each other’s development. One pair structured this change so that the mentor led the first block of sessions and the mentee the second. The mentee had clearly learnt from working with the more experienced artist and used one of the exercises that had worked successfully for her. Both mentors offered verbal encouragement and constructive criticism. During the reflection meetings, one participant in particular was prepared to comment on aspects of his teaching that he felt had not worked and, as the project advanced, he worked on these aspects. This suggests that the group members were sufficiently invested in a learning community that was prepared to seek alternative strategies.

As the research project progressed the artists invested themselves increasingly in the reflective discussions. The mentor relationships were not mono-directional in emphasis, i.e. all participants learnt from one another. Findings suggest that the group had the ‘ability, sensitivity and inclination’ to develop their thinking skills (Kirkwood 2004). A community of enquiry formed, which, although sometimes uncomfortable, was prepared to question existing practices and investigate alternative strategies (Wells 1999).

Working within a community of enquiry was perceived to be of benefit to the artists’ pedagogical practice and to their understanding of their artistic practice. The community also developed a life beyond the structured opportunities offered by the project for interface, with e-mail correspondence showing evidence of a continued sharing of knowledge and ideas.

Having the researcher work with the artists over the duration of the project and prompting self-reflection may have contributed to the development of pedagogical models and skill-sharing strategies, by making processes explicit.

Partly by developing their pedagogical knowledge, the project seems to have enabled the mentees to communicate their subject-matter knowledge. Although the artists perceive themselves as operating outside formal education, and do not wish to be restricted by curricular requirements, one of the artists believed that being able to watch how the students were taught in class would have been valuable. So, although the artists have not consciously acquired or applied curricular knowledge, one felt that this would have been of benefit to his practice.

It is difficult to make any generalised suggestions for artists working in similar mentoring relationships, as so much is dependent on the personalities of the individuals involved and the specific context of those relationships. All the artists were adamant that there were no prescriptive pedagogical strategies – lesson plans, for example – that would be suitable for all circumstances. The artists adapted their mentoring model,
deciding to stay with the same pairings but swapping student groups. The artists positioned themselves as belonging outside the school system; they encouraged students, for example, to make mistakes and use trial and error, rather than producing quality coursework for assessment. The artists’ body of work, the work the students produced throughout the project and the interview comments combine to suggest that the artists challenged normative practices and naturalised beliefs (Addison and Burgess 2006: 46). It cannot be proved whether the work produced by the students differed qualitatively to work they produce under the guidance of their teacher. However, the artists all felt it would be valuable to work more closely with teachers.

As the project advanced, artists developed relationships with students, which allowed them to tailor their pedagogical strategies to suit individual learning styles. The relatively long-term timeframe allowed for this, and artists called for such projects to be of even longer duration.

The experience of the activity reinforced the artists’ perceptions of themselves as agents of change (Buckley et al. 2008). They did not want to be assimilated into the school system as they felt it restricted creativity and independent thought. However, they realised that their approach was quite demanding for the students and that the students needed time to adjust.

**Limitations of the project and suggestions for further research**

In practice, because they were involved in teaching sessions, the artists did not have time to record their thoughts. This would have been a chance to hear their immediate reactions to their teaching interactions and views which they may not have felt able to share with the group, but their involvement in the task prevented this.

This research focused on the artists’ experiences of gallery education activities; it did not examine the experiences of teachers. Furthermore the artists felt that their work would have benefited from a greater understanding of how students are taught in school, and a closer working relationship with teachers involved. In further research this imbalance might be addressed by examining the learning processes undergone by both parties working in conjunction.

As artists called for greater experience of how art is taught in schools, it may be worth looking at extending engage’s ‘Watch this Space’ programme to provide more opportunities for artists to take part in placements. This professional development programme for artists, teachers and gallery educators enables them to gain first-hand experience of each other’s work through a secondment scheme: gallery educators and artist educators are funded to do a three-day secondment in schools where they gain knowledge of the curriculum, teaching and learning methods and how gallery visits impact on classroom teaching, and teachers are placed in galleries over four days, where they become familiar with the space, its education programme and the opportunities for partnership working.

The artists called for an informal network of artists to be established to enable them to discuss their artistic practice. This could be extended to include their pedagogical practice, with workshops using stimulated recall as a tool. Further research could focus on the benefits of such networks.

This research project has not attempted to explore whether the work produced by the students differed qualitatively from work they produced under the guidance of their teacher. This could be investigated further through conducting semi-structured interviews with students and teachers. It may also be worthwhile to consider work produced by students working with artists in the context of the National Curriculum and schemes of assessment.
References


Notes

(1) See http://www.kellyrichardson.net/ (accessed May 2007)
(2) See http://www.workplacegallery.co.uk/home/Stenbom/stenbom_watch.html (accessed May 2007)
(4) http://ncl.ac.uk/business-directorate/strategy/policies/practice.png
NORTH EAST CLUSTER PHASE 2.2 RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by ISIS Arts in collaboration with the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, University of Newcastle, and partner artists and teachers.

Final report by Anna Goulding, Chris Whitehead, Andrew Newton (University of Newcastle) Mary Lowe, Sharon Bailey (ISIS).
Introduction
The research project explores a number of research questions relating to the impact upon teachers of working with artists in collaborative initiatives to produce films. It studies the pedagogical skill-sharing between teachers and artists, and how teachers use the knowledge and skills developed back in the classroom.

Research questions
What are the dynamics and outcomes of peer learning amongst teachers in individual schools working with artists and digital video technologies, and teachers working in concert across schools which have feeder relationships?

What is the impact on teachers and on their pedagogical practice of developing artwork and exhibiting it in a gallery setting?

Theoretical framework
Skill-sharing
The research will investigate the skill-sharing between artists and teachers. The differences between artists and teachers, and the different professional cultures that they represent have been widely discussed (Pringle 2002; Sekules 2003). Veronica Sekules' recognition of the importance for arts organisations and schools to 'recognise the cultural specificity and difference of the other' seems crucial. It is important that artists and teachers recognise that they play different roles and possess different skills.

As noted in the previous report (2.1, p96), the vast majority of teaching in art is skills-based (Downing 2004), so gallery educators can help relate the changing field of contemporary practice to the school curriculum, 'a role that presupposes art teachers are unsupported in developing a critical and creative curriculum that makes reference to contemporary art (Addison and Burgess 2006). In investigating pedagogical interchange between artist and teacher, this research will explore the transference of skills, knowledge and understanding.

Peer learning
The need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers has been highlighted by the Training Development Agency (2006). The agency continues to work closely with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to support the continuing professional development of teachers. This work is closely linked to the School Workforce Development Board’s three-year strategy 'Developing People to Support Learning'. It is therefore pertinent to investigate teachers undertaking CPD opportunities by working with artists. The National Foundation for Educational Research's 2000 report into arts education in secondary schools suggested that teachers can deliver creative practice and called for teachers to be given chances to develop in this area, rather than calling for increased numbers of artists going into schools (Harland 2000).

Such collaborative initiatives invite peer learning that supports the notion that knowledge is a social process situated within communities of practice. Because learning is not formally structured in such contexts, learners have to invest themselves in communities of practice and they can contribute in various interdependent ways (Wenger 1999). Developing this further, Wells notes that inquiring communities question existing practices and investigate alternative strategies (Wells 1999).

As a CPD opportunity, this project could be seen as investigating an 'alternative' way of offering this type of training. The week of practical workshops where teachers learn through producing their own work, then start the project in schools before the artists come to help can be seen as an unusual CPD opportunity. When considering communities of teachers as learners (Schoenfeld 2004; Shulman 2004), it is important to investigate what conditions are needed to facilitate successful collaborations.

Inter-school progression/feeder school interaction
The research will explore to what extent the teachers approach developments and/or progression in the curriculum between middle and high school (the system currently in place in Northumberland). As such, it will consider the ways in which the teaching of film and digital media differs across the various key stages. It will also investigate the different ways in which teachers implement the skills and knowledge learnt once they have returned to the classroom.
The transfer from primary to secondary school is still problematic in the UK, despite policy intervention aimed at easing the move (Noyes 2006). There is evidence of dips in pupil progress at each point in the transition, whether from infant to middle or junior school, or from middle to senior or high school (Galton 2000). Also, most pupils exhibit a degree of anxiety over the move (Ibid). Galton and Hargreaves (2002) suggest that in tackling transfer problems, it may be important to explore whether the structural limitation inherent in the school system is preventing further progress, rather than, ‘placing all the blame on teachers’ (Ibid: 189).

Galton et al (Galton 1999) showed that initiatives aimed at easing the transition for pupils focused on either improving administrative arrangements, such as exchanging pupil records, or by reducing pupils’ anxiety through social and personal measures, for example, induction days which allowed children to experience using the canteen. In contrast, there were few activities concerning curricular continuity or pedagogical practice, such as secondary teachers teaching lessons in feeder schools, joint programmes of teaching skills or teacher exchanges. They suggest that future efforts should be focused on the curriculum and accompanying pedagogy. In this context a focus on shared experiences and skills acquisition amongst teachers working in schools which have feeder relationships is opportune and may offer possibilities for new models of practice.

Boys and underachievement
The gap between the performance of boys and girls is well documented. In 1998 Ofsted published a report entitled The Gender Divide and followed this with Boys’ Achievement in Secondary Schools (Ofsted 2003). The 2003 report contains information on subject related strategies, teaching and classroom management and the causes of boys’ under performance. This report was based on HMI survey visits to over fifty-three schools and analysis of GCSE performances. Overall, the 2000 and 2001 GCSE results show girls doing better than boys in nearly all subjects, apart from physics. In Art and Design the average points achieved by girls exceeded that of boys by 0.91, a greater difference than in any other subject (Ofsted 2003: 49). The report points out that certain approaches can be particularly helpful to improve boys’ performance, for example, boys’ motivation can be enhanced by giving them access to computers for interactive learning or to help them improve their presentation for coursework (Ibid: 9). One case study they drew from was an arts college that had developed a practical approach to media studies, which included filmmaking. The report noted how this seemed to transfer into other subject areas:

The facilities for using ICT and making moving images were good and were beginning to have an impact in other areas of the curriculum. For example, animation software was used in mathematics to develop spatial concepts relating to area and volume (Ofsted 2003: 21).

This suggests that digital media may be one strategy to encourage boys’ performance, in particular. However, the report does state that caution is necessary as popular conceptions that ‘boy-friendly’ texts and ICT help boys to produce better writing can be over generalised (Ibid: 21).

Methodology
The methodology is qualitative, using extensive semi-structured interviews with the artists and teachers. Three teachers formed a focus group that was interviewed at various stages throughout the project and interactions during the training days were observed throughout the project. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, then coded for analysis using NVivo 7 software. In total there were approximately six to seven hours of interview transcripts.

Introduction to the education system in Northumberland
In Northumberland, the school system differs to that of Scotland, Wales and most of the rest of England. Pupils still take the same examinations as in England and Wales, but instead of having a primary and secondary school, there are three school stages:

- first schools are for pupils aged four to nine (National Curriculum Reception to Year 4)
- middle schools are for pupils aged nine to thirteen (National Curriculum Years 5 to 8)
- high schools are for pupils age thirteen and older (National Curriculum Years 9 to 13)
The timeframe is set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April-May 2007</td>
<td>Three artists were appointed, one to work in each school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Schools in Berwick were identified and approached to participate in the project by ISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Artists to identify level and content of teacher media labs by visiting schools to meet with teachers after school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007</td>
<td>Three-day intensive media labs, Berwick upon Tweed. Artists and teachers worked together on a series of workshops that covered aspects of digital media such as using sound, using software packages such as Photoshop, using scanners. They also visited and discussed works shown as part of the Berwick film festival (2) and started to develop their own films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2007</td>
<td>Three-day media lab workshop, Berwick upon Tweed. Artists and teachers continued to work together to produce individual films and plan the schools based project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February-March 2008</td>
<td>Teachers start project in schools and artists join them for three days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-June 2008</td>
<td>Projects completed in schools. Pupils' work shown in one of the schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January-February 2009</td>
<td>Mini festival of students and teachers' films shown at Berwick Gymnasium Gallery (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This project involved teachers from two middle schools that feed into Berwick High School. A teaching assistant from the Grove Special School and the headteacher from Cornhill First School were also involved, although they did not form part of the focus group because they were unable to attend all of the sessions.

Introduction to the Art and Design curriculum
The way that the Art and Design curriculum is structured ensures progression for school pupils. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) sets out the standards for Art and Design at Key Stages 1 and 2 with the aim of providing a range
of experiences necessary to achieve a balanced programme for Art and Design. Digital media is one of the core units included in every scheme of work (other core units are painting, textiles and sculpture). Core units may be taught in different key stages, although the emphasis will be different.

At Key Stages 1 and 2 there are three units that specifically concentrate on digital media (these are not mandatory):

- unit 2A Picture This!: children explore an issue in their lives. They learn how to use a viewfinder and record their observations and ideas using a variety of methods, including photography and collage

- unit 4A Viewpoints: children explore how to convey the atmosphere and story of a dream. They invent a number of characters who are photographed ‘on location’

- unit 6A People in Action: children explore how to convey movement in their work. They explore dynamic activities such as sport, dance, drama and music as a starting point for making work in two dimensions. They look at how the idea of movement is shown in different kinds of art, such as photography, and experiment with different methods and techniques to show movement (DCSF 2008a)

The level of complexity develops as the child progresses through the different key stages. For example, at Key Stages 1 and 2 Unit 2A Picture This! the Standards Site (3) suggests questions that the teacher may use:

Discuss what images children will record; what will they focus on? What will be in the frame? What will they leave out? What key idea will they try to communicate? Will they take a close up or be further away? Will their image be portrait or landscape?

(DCSF 2008b)

By Art and Design Key Stage 3, pupils’ progression has been taken into account. In Unit 7A Self-image, for example, the Standards Site suggestions show what an eleven to fourteen year old (Years 7 to 9) would be expected to achieve:

Small groups of pupils could take photographs of each other and process and print out scanned images or print images from a digital camera. Pupils could use digital media to build up and compose a self-image by scanning in their composition and experimenting with digital colour and image making (DCSF 2008c).

By GCSE, there are various examining boards with different programmes of study. The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a representative examining board and its GCSE in Art and Design (Photography), shows that pupils aged fourteen to sixteen (Years 10 to 11) would be expected to have developed their skills considerably. For example, the board requires candidates to ‘show knowledge and understanding of a range of processes and variety of ways of working related to the chosen areas of photography including, where appropriate, information and communication technology and the use of digital imaging (AQA 2008).

ISIS
ISIS Arts initiates and manages artist residencies, productions and exhibitions, and works with artists on collaborative projects and events. It provides arts projects which benefit individual artists, schools and communities alike, while promoting the professional status of the artist.

ISIS has a digital facility serving artists in the region and energetically promotes an interdisciplinary approach to the use of new media in the arts.

Based in the centre of Newcastle, ISIS supports artist residencies across the northern region. It works with around seventy artists a year on its residency programme and a further forty as part of its training programmes.

ISIS is a not-for-profit organisation and receives revenue funding from Arts Council England, North East, Northumberland County Council and Newcastle City Council.

The two mentors had participated in the previous phase of enquire, so were asked to take part in the project to add a sense of continuity. To select the mentees, the mentors drew up a pool of artists known to them who were approached and asked to take part.

Background to the artists
Neil Bromwich, based in Berwick upon Tweed, works in collaboration with his partner Zoe Walker. They work in a variety
of media exploring relationships between people and their social and political environments in surreal and often absurd ways. Their recent exhibition at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Limbo-Land, involved a film of lunar exploration at dawn and dusk (4).

Lindsay Duncanson (5) graduated in photography, video and digital imagery in 1998 and has since worked as an artist and freelance photographer and video maker, exhibiting work throughout the region. She recently completed her MA in Photography at Sunderland University where she currently works as a visiting lecturer in photography and video.

Kelly Richardson (6) is a mid-career digital media artist with extensive experience of working with young people. She was one of the practitioners involved in the previous enquire project (Newman and Whitehead 2006).

John Quinn is a mid-career digital media artist with a strong performance background and extensive experience of working with young people. He was previously the education coordinator at ISIS and also contributed to the previous enquire project, but not in his capacity as an artist.

The project also aimed to develop the experience of working in educational settings for two early career artists Shirley Wood and Nicola Smith, although this report will not concentrate on this aspect.

Background to Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival and the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery
First staged in 2005, the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival ran over nine days in late September 2007. A range of contemporary film and media art was shown in historical and architectural locations, including underground ice houses, prison cells and Elizabethan Ramparts. One of the venues was the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery, part of the Berwick upon Tweed Barracks and Main Guard. The Gallery shows a range of contemporary exhibitions.

Introducing teachers and their experience of digital media and how art is taught in schools
The three teachers that formed the focus group were from Berwick High School, Glendale Middle School and Tweedmouth County Middle School. Both of the middle schools feed into the high school. Two of the teachers had worked with artists before (Anna Turnbull of Glendale Middle School and Sabina Mauie of Tweedmouth County Middle School). Below, each teacher explains their experience of working with digital media before the start of the project:

Jane Hamilton, Art and Design teacher at Berwick High School:

We don't have the facilities or equipment to work with digital images up there, so we haven't actually started using any … Although I work in photography a lot and teach photography, I never use digital, I'd much rather have a darkroom. I think there's more control over it in a darkroom and it's much more a personal thing than working with digital. But I need to come and learn digital even though it's a scary thing to me.

Sabina Mauie, Tweedmouth County Middle School:

… And I'm the step before that and I'm trying to teach the children the basics, so they can, when they come to you [at the high school], have the time to do the exams. I think it's only post-school you can really develop your own interests and experiment … I try and cover basic things, for example perspective, so the children have some idea of that when they move up and line drawing and things like that … I don't feel very computer literate so I feel very restricted by that.

Anna Turnbull, Glendale Middle School:

As far as the children go, I've done some digital animation with them, just using a simple digi-blue camera, and the package that goes with that, where they've made models, so they've made pictures and then moved them and re-shot them, so it's like a stop-frame animation. But that's all I've done at school.

At the start of the project the teachers were asked what they felt about the art curriculum, and the ways that art is taught in school:

Jane Hamilton: Well it'd be good to see more artists coming into the school, but because we've got certain criteria to meet by a certain time, get kids through exams and things, we really don't have a lot of spare time to work on in the schools.

Sabina Mauie: I think an hour a week is not a long time and a class of thirty children and one teacher, again it's not … your lessons have to be very structured if you're trying to get your point across.
Anna Turnbull: Well I feel quite lucky, because with a supportive head as well as the hour a week with each class, I also get once a term a double lesson with a smaller group, just Year 7 and 8, so on top of their hour a week they get a two-hour lesson for a term. But I feel in middle school as well, because I'm not constricted by exams, I've got a free range to teach a huge range of different processes and I just pick and choose.

Interestingly, the teacher from one of the middle schools felt that she had relative freedom and a supportive head teacher which enabled her to teach a rich and varied curriculum. The other two teachers felt slightly more inhibited by the length of lessons and constraints such as exams.

The teachers were asked how easy they found incorporating digital media art into the curriculum and the challenges involved. Teachers cited a lack of equipment and training as barriers to teaching using digital media:

Jane Hamilton: It could be easily in there, but again, you need to have the equipment to work from.

Sabina Maule: You'd not only have to have the equipment but have the training as well, and I think time has to be found within the working day to train teachers and not just rely on training ourselves ... I think time constraints ... in a school situation ... are quite hard.

Anna Turnbull: Yeah, and the little snippets that you get aren't enough to feel confident enough to take it back and deliver it in the classroom.

Jane Hamilton: And you have to have reliable equipment as well, because if it doesn't work when you're doing the lesson ... I think that's why some teachers don't do it, because if it doesn't work in your lesson then you have to fall back, you have to have another lesson to do, because the children aren't going to go away for an hour while you fix the equipment ... it's the technical knowledge of actually doing something with the ideas isn't it?

The teachers were asked what they wanted to get out of the project:

Sabina Maule: It's really good to meet your contemporaries, to meet your colleagues working in other schools, seeing what they're doing ... The aim of the project is to really, it's to use ICT in an innovative way, but also it's to spark interest in the children in art and get them ... well boys particularly ...

Jane Hamilton: I really need to catch up with the children, to catch up with how they can handle digital images and things.

Anna Turnbull wanted to be able to deliver a project for Year 8s:

Anna Turnbull: I hope to come away with enough to do a small project next term, with, possibly, the Year 8s.

Teachers were asked about their expected outcomes for the project. Two of the teachers, Jane Hamilton and Sabina Maule, felt that introducing digital media would engage boys:

Jane Hamilton: Well certainly if it's video, we might encourage ... you lose a lot of boys as they get older in art ... So you've quite a ... obviously we need to think about how the boys look at things and I think this might give them an opening that they might find interesting if we were to do more digital and video work. Because I mark for AQA, round other schools and I've seen quite a lot of video work now in for GCSE and everything, there's quite a lot of video work in and it's always boys that have done it. So it's a way I think, of encouraging boys to stay on, because it is mainly girls that stay on a do their AS and A2.

This accords with Ofsted's recommendations about engaging boys by using different approaches such as using filmmaking as a tool for learning (Ofsted 2003: 21).

Project description

Media Lab workshops with teachers and artists
On the first day various activities were devised to introduce teachers and artists to one another and to find out about people's artistic backgrounds and interests. For example, teachers and artists made an image of a favourite piece of art and then talked about it to the rest of the group. Artists gave presentations about their own work showing how they used digital media tools; they looked at webart, video art, audio aspects of work and photography. In the afternoon, the whole group went around the films and videos shown in various
locations across the town as part of Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival. Teachers then made a response to the works they had seen.

As the week progressed, the artists led workshops on the different aspects of digital media, video, photography and sound. Artist Lindsay Duncanson led a workshop on photography, involving a practical demonstration on how to use the various functions of digital cameras. The teachers and artist then walked around Berwick taking photographs and used software packages such as Photoshop to manipulate the images.

Other sessions were aimed at helping artists to work more effectively in schools. Here artists introduced case studies from their own experiences and teachers suggested possible solutions to problems. Often these sessions took the format of a group discussion.

As the project progressed, teachers worked with artists to develop a school based project. They discussed ideas, decided what software packages would be used and wrote lesson plans.

**Developing the project in the classroom**
The teachers delivered the project in schools in the spring term. Before the projects started in schools, two teachers, a teaching assistant and an artist met to go through the software that they would be using, suggesting that the community of practice had extended beyond the time and requirements of the project.

In the spring term, the teachers started the projects in school and once they were established, the artists joined the teachers in school for three days.

The final day of a workshop with Neil Bromwich and Anna Turnbull was observed. Turnbull had introduced the idea of making an animation based around a ghost story (pupils had seen a piece of animation at the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery) and pupils had produced storyboards. When the artist joined the project he started with a demonstration to the whole class showing them the basics of the software packages AnimatorDV Simple and Movie Maker. The students then worked in small groups on their own animations and the artist and teacher circulated, helping with problems or offering suggestions as they arose.

**Discussion of findings**

**Skill-sharing**

**Technical knowledge**
Teachers developed various technical skills throughout the practical workshops led by the artists. These skills included using various functions on digital cameras, scanning images onto computers, using different software to manipulate digital images, shooting and editing film and recording and editing sound. The software programmes they used included Final Cut Pro, Animate It, AnimatorDV Simple, Movie Maker and Photoshop. The quotations below show after the third day of the workshop the types of technical knowledge that teachers learnt:

**Anna Turnbull:** I did the photography and was shown how to use my camera, which I've never really thought about before, because I don't get the time. And used the scanner, and Photoshop, and got an idea of a starting point really, for exploring Photoshop, and it's a huge program that I just feel I would need hours and hours to do that before I would even think about doing anything with it in the classroom, because at the moment what I've learnt is far too small to do something with it in school.

**Anna Turnbull:** Yeah that was really interesting, just learning how you can put different soundtracks together and look at them visually as well, and exploit sounds and compress sounds, and jam them up against each other and fade one track into another and …

**Jane Hamilton:** It’s certainly good because it let us know what's possible, what we can do before … you thought of sound but you didn't really know how much you could add to any sort of visual artwork you were doing, so it's been really good, the sound.

Notably, using sound is an aspect of digital media which the two teachers had not really considered before participating in the workshops.

**Applying technical skills in the classroom**
The teachers' approach to producing their own work varied. Jane Hamilton worked on a piece that was more focused on her
own interests, whilst Sabina Maule specifically produced an animated film that she could use as a starting point for children to develop their own films:

**Sabina Maule:** Well my film is very ... I'm hoping it's very child orientated, I want to use it as a hook to make the children interested in the project and it's based around football, because sport is a very popular subject in our school, the boys are very keen on football. And if you can engage the boys the girls will go along with them. And I've even got picture photographs of the boys -- they're actually going to be in the film, some of the boys, in the class. So that was my purpose, that's my reason for doing it ... I would have loved to have done something more personal, but that'll have to wait, because I want to learn the skills and take the skills back to school.

Teachers seemed to develop technical skills that they were able to apply to the classroom quite early on into the project. In the intervening time between the first and second set of workshops, Sabina Maule was already using skills she had gained during the workshop. She had given an assembly on rail safety and was able to insert some video clips of a train crossing the rail bridge spanning the River Tweed. She noted that she had not been able to do that previously.

**Pedagogical skill-sharing between teachers and artists**

The teachers demonstrated considerable pedagogical skills that the artists learnt. For example, Sabina Maule was going to use the technical imperfections of the film she had produced as a way of encouraging pupils to be involved in their own learning:

**Sabina Maule:** But for the purposes of my exercise it doesn't have to be perfect, because I'm producing it to show the children and I could use that as a learning point and say to them, 'How could that be improved? Could you improve it?'

She expanded on how she was going to use the video as a stimulus. The following extract shows how one of the artists, John Quinn, was able to question her about how she was going to use her animation with her pupils:

**Sabina Maule:** And also there are things in that that I could desperately improve on but I have deliberately not, because I want to show them that it's not straightforward and it is difficult and that you do have to work on it. And I will point that out and say, 'Look, look at the lighting there, it's not right, or look at the …'

**John Quinn:** So will you show it to them, talk to them and show it again?

**Sabina Maule:** Yeah. I might even show them it more than once ...

**John Quinn:** That is a good idea.

One of the artists, Lindsay Duncanson, was asked what she was learning through the project:

**Lindsay Duncanson:** Because you're working with teachers you're constantly having to think about how they're going to apply that knowledge to a class, so whilst you're showing them the software, you're also talking about how you're going to apply that to a class, and then how the teachers and yourself might then apply that to a class of thirty children, how that might make the software relevant.

Furthermore, the opportunity of working with the teachers during the intensive three-day workshops was introducing different ideas about how to work in a school context:

**Lindsay Duncanson:** And on top of that, you find that you think well actually, what a great way to work in a school, so rather than just working as an artist by yourself on a computer at the side of the room, you'd been filled with much more confidence to go and work with teachers and say, 'Right, let's work together, let's make this work as a class, let's use the software as a class and you're engaged with it and I'm engaged with it and the kids can then come and feed off that and …'

She described that her experience of being an artist in residence or visiting artist in school usually did not involve working closely with the teachers. She felt that working in greater collaboration with teachers may have an impact on pupils' learning experience:

**Lindsay Duncanson:** Yeah, so generally, in fact most of the time, you go into a class and say you're given eight to fifteen kids and you go off and work separately to the rest of the classroom. But actually, working with the teachers more closely, and think well actually, what they will get out of it and
what I will get out of it and the kids will get out of it will be a better, more rounded experience. By working with the class and the teachers as well, you’re leaving something with the teachers, the teachers are learning and you’re learning from the teachers, and the kids, I’ve no doubt, will be teaching the staff as well.

One of the workshops involved the artists working with the teachers to carefully plan the schools based project. They filled in a lesson plan as part of this exercise. Duncanson found this aspect particularly useful:

**Lindsay Duncanson:** It’s great doing all the planning and structures … actually I think it’s just most valuable sitting and doing it with the teachers, if you’re going to go into the school to have an hour to sit down and plan …

One of the teachers (Sabina Maule) also commented on how this co-planning had been useful:

**Sabina Maule:** Well I think it’s certainly focused me and although we haven’t talked an awful lot about the size of the groups and the timing, I know exactly now what I have to do, and I think Lindsay would feel comfortable now coming to school because she’s got a very good idea of how it’s all going to work.

**Lindsay Duncanson:** Absolutely, and because we’ve now had that time to discuss stuff, coming into school I know my position in the class space and I know how I can support you and support the kids, and we can now work as a team in that situation, rather than either of us being on the back foot, maybe.

After Neil Bromwich had worked in school for three days, the teacher from Glendale Middle School felt that he had encouraged the children to develop their work as far as possible as well as providing technical support to her:

**Anna Turnbull:** The way that he has been talking to groups and getting them to improve and try again on various aspects of what they’ve done but he has also supported me a lot in using the packages and using the equipment.

Perhaps the artist’s specialist knowledge made him aware of the possibilities for pupils’ work and so he was able to encourage them to refine and improve their animations.

The artist felt that he had learnt a lot from Anna Turnbull’s approach to teaching and classroom management:

**Neil Bromwich:** In terms of learning how to organise a class you kind of pick that up as you are in different schools and different spaces and just so I’ve learnt a lot from the way that Anna organises her lessons and the freedom that she allows a lot of her students that you can actually trust them to go off and do things and not be too concerned that they are going to be climbing up the walls.

It is notable that Neil Bromwich instinctively developed pedagogical skills by observing different teachers whilst he worked as an artist in various schools. This is significant when considering the findings from *enquire 2.1*, where the report explored possible ways of developing artists’ pedagogical skills.

Neil Bromwich also felt that he had learnt from the ways that the other artists used the software packages:

… You are always picking up new approaches, new aspects of it. Each program, like Photoshop or Final Cut Pro, has got so many different applications and ways of using it that you just get into the habit of using it your way because it suits your practice as an artist and it is really enriching to see the way other people use those media tools.

**Seeing work exhibited in an art gallery context**

In terms of developing knowledge and understanding about contemporary arts practice, the teachers noted that seeing and discussing various films shown as part of the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival was useful. The artworks were shown in a variety of unusual venues, from former prison cells, former ice houses to the Ramparts. Jane Hamilton commented on how the context of the works affected her interpretation of the pieces:

**Jane Hamilton:** I just thought they suited it really well, because it took you back to the time – especially in the jailhouse where what was happening a hundred years ago in those spaces and what’s happening now in those spaces, and there’s still an echo of the past in it. So I think you can’t go into these spaces without thinking and affecting whatever work is placed in that space.
One of the workshops involved the artists showing their own work and Sabina Maule was particularly struck by one of Bromwich’s pieces. She noted how seeing this, alongside the other works from the film festival, made her think about subjective judgement and how she wanted to get this idea across to her pupils:

**Sabina Maule:** I think I said this morning when Neil was talking and he did the mirror-covered boat, and they had had that walk and at one end of the walk there was the nuclear power station and at the other end was the chapel, a place of worship [referring to How the Universe Sang Itself into Being, 2004] (7). And it struck me that it was so opposite to each other and yet each had its own validity. And as we went round the films this afternoon, I felt that some of the films had that aspect of opposites, that animated ocean in particular, had the power of water but the gentleness of water. And the actor who had a happy face and a sad face, totally opposite. So it was really the idea of opposites that struck me.

... Because each one was valid in its own right, then the children’s work should be valid in its own right, it doesn’t have to be the same as everybody else’s, and if their work is different from somebody else’s it’s still valid. But getting that across to children is very difficult because they want their work to be the same as everybody else’s, they want it to be right, but there isn’t a right and wrong in art, in my opinion.

Sabina Maule took her pupils to see the works in the film festival in between the first and second workshop. She described how she intended to use this visit as a starting point before they began their own projects:

**Sabina Maule:** And some of them were absolutely riveted to it and what they could and couldn’t see in it, which I found very interesting, and wondered if they could create that there … and I didn’t want to over-discuss it with them because I wanted them to take it home and Mull it over, because I knew I was going to be doing a project with them and we can now, in retrospect, go back and say what they thought about it. For Berwick children it was something quite radical.

It is noteworthy that she felt that seeing contemporary films like these was a new experience for her pupils. This shows the importance of festivals such as this being a practical way of showing contemporary art in locations away from larger urban conurbations. Maule refreshed the children about their visit to see the films before they started the project and she felt that it introduced ideas about authorship and how the audience brings their own interpretation to pieces of art:

**Sabina Maule:** They could make a statement without actually talking about it and they could leave people to make up their own minds and some of them have taken that on board – they’re just presenting their story and whoever is viewing it – the viewer is going to have to make up their own mind about it.

She described how halfway through the project, some of the children who had lost some momentum were motivated when they heard that their animations were going to be shown in the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery:

**Sabina Maule:** When they didn’t get instant results some of them began to wane – knowing that the gymnasium wanted to show their films perked them up.

This suggests that the status and recognition connected with showing work in a public venue is prestigious and a strong motivating factor for pupils.

The three teachers described what they had gained through seeing the artists describe the work that they were currently working on:

**Sabina Maule:** When he dropped the letter ‘D’ into it ... [describing a video piece that created movements around the spellings of words and sounds].

**Jane Hamilton:** That wee piece of work shows his personality I think, identifies his piece of work, so it’s interesting to see ...”

**Sabina Maule:** I loved seeing the artist work, definitely, and it’s ...

**Anna Turnbull:** Relating it to them as well, rather than seeing it in a gallery out of context, I wouldn’t give it the same amount of thought I don’t think.
During this session, a lot of the questions the teachers asked the artists related to practical ways that they could apply their ideas to lessons. They asked where Lindsay Duncan had bought some canvas to print digital images onto. They seemed to take the artists’ original ideas and then work out a way of applying them to the classroom. The artists’ work seemed to offer original and creative inspiration and the teachers were then able to use their pedagogical skill to interpret the ideas to the wider audience (in this case, the classroom).

**Communities of practice**

Wenger outlined a number of ways that communities develop their practice (2007) and the table below has been drawn from his website (8). Members in such communities solve problems, request information, seek experience, reuse assets, coordinate and synergise, discuss developments, document projects, make visits, map knowledge and identify gaps in their knowledge. The examples below, used to illustrate each aspect, have been taken from the interviews, discussions and observations from the project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generic</th>
<th>Berwick evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeking experience</td>
<td>J: What would it be if it didn’t work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J: Are they used to just being given things to do, they’re not used to coming up with things themselves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination and synergy</td>
<td>Teachers discussed pooling photography equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing developments</td>
<td>Sabina Maule discussed the possibility of showing children’s films from all the schools at a presentation evening, and was monitoring how far along the other projects were.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation of projects</td>
<td>Pupils’ films to be collated onto a DVD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits</td>
<td>Two of the teachers and one of the artists met up one evening to go through a software package in preparation for using it in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps</td>
<td>I really need to catch up with the children, to catch up with how they can handle digital images and things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’ve noticed that the lighting was wrong so I’m going to re-shoot that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’ll certainly be a way for me to develop my own art from being just two-dimensional and three-dimensional, and now it can be moving, which is even more exciting. Because before I had done sculptures with sound in them but this time I can do sculpture, sound and movement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requests for information       | How do you delete mistakes without undoing all of the work?                     |
The table shows that throughout the project, artists and teachers were working together to solve problems, pool their experience and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

During the focus group interviews the teachers often commented on the relaxed dynamics of the group. They repeatedly stated that the artists had been patient, helpful, and generous in sharing their knowledge:

**Anna Turnbull:** ... And very forthcoming with ideas and giving you input constantly, you could do this, you could that ... 

**Sabina Maule:** But not pushing their ideas onto your project, just making you think of your ideas and just showing you how you can do it, really.

Very early into the project, Sabina Maule stated that she hoped the artists were learning from the teachers as much as she was learning from them.

She found discussing the films shown as part of the film festival with the group refreshing:

**Sabina Maule:** I thought that going round the films with people you didn't know and then discussing them was to me absolutely fantastic, because ... I often go round these things with my family or husband or something like that and you know what their reaction is, because you know them so well, it's so nice to do it with strangers, because you don't know what their reaction is going to be, and you see things or recognise things that you didn't know ... I got a lot out of it.

This shows that for this teacher, the intellectual discussion that the project stimulated was important.

Working as a group enabled the teacher to create things she had initially found daunting:

**Sabina Maule:** ... And also the creative response, when he talked about creative response I thought how on earth are we going to make a creative response about this? And look at what we did, how we worked together and made that collage and it was just brilliant.

Both artists and teachers seemed to 'recognise the cultural specificity and difference of the other' (Sekules 2003) and this seemed crucial to the development of a productive learning community. The teachers described how they found working with the artists and what they had learnt from them. Hamilton noted that because the artists were not restricted by the curriculum, they were able to offer alternative viewpoints:

**Jane Hamilton:** Encouraging us I think just to ... is good because sometimes you're quite – well in teaching you're quite restricted, aren't you, with what you do, so it's good to get their sort of look at life, which can be a little bit different from ours ... we're in quite a confined space, as in when you're in teaching it's very controlled, we have to meet targets ... so we know which ones that we've got to work on to get them up to that level, we have to work on certain ones that are under the Cs [C grade] to get them up there. And because of that you've tunnel vision, we've got to cover this, this, this ...

**Sabina Maule:** So your creativity's squashed ...

**Jane Hamilton:** Yes, so you are, it's very structured, and it's so controlled, so it's nice to have someone else away from teaching, where there isn't the constraints of targets. Obviously I have a different view because they're not working to timetables, they're not working to targets or anything, so it's their response to the world around them, and our response is quite different I think because of the constraints we're under.

Here the teachers observed that the curriculum frameworks that they worked towards can inhibit creativity, supporting Addison and Burgess' findings from the previous *enquire* report phase 1, that:

... teachers are liable to become institutionalised, establishing routines and formulaic procedures that are antithetical to creative and critical practice (Addison and Burgess 2005: 62) (9).

Two of the teachers commented further:

**Jane Hamilton:** It would be lovely just to start a project and let them go mad on it, but ...

**Sabina Maule:** Yes, but in school there are certain things you have to do, so if you want to do a really interesting project, you have to make sure those criteria are in your project.
This reinforces the findings from *enquire 2.1*, of the artists following Pringle's definition of an artist as a 'social activist' (Pringle 2002: 102):

**John Quinn**: ... We bring otherness, adults who are – we're in a different stream, we're running down a different path to most adults that they will come into contact with (Goulding, Newman and Whitehead 2008).

Teachers found it increasingly useful working with other teachers:

**Sabina Maule**: And it's been really good to speak to the art teachers from the other schools as well ...

**Anna Turnbull**: Just gauge what they do, what you do, how it cross references, which bits we can use and ...

**Jane Hamilton**: So if we're stuck with something we can phone Anna up and say, 'Can you remember how to do this?' [laughs]

Teachers were able to learn from each other and, embracing the idea of a community of practice, were willing to explore alternative strategies:

**Jane Hamilton**: Well it's made me think ... I think Anna's the same ... about the practicalities of taking children out to film, and what could be done instead, when we do class based work, it might be better to do animation. And after seeing Sabina's animation, which is fantastic, I thought that would have been much better fun for the children to do.

**Jane Hamilton** felt that working with different people had stimulated creative ideas:

**Jane Hamilton**: I actually think just even the discussions, the relaxed discussion we have with the artist and with other teachers, we've learnt a lot from each other, and certainly a lot from the artists, but apart from ideas, it sparks ideas off.

As the workshops progressed, the teachers felt that they were able to offer the artists advice about working in schools:

**Sabina Maule**: I felt that John had obviously been mulling over how he was going to approach this project with children in schools and he asked some very pertinent questions, [about] the motivation of children, the prior knowledge of children, the involvement of children, all that sort of thing ...

**Jane Hamilton**: [and] we referred to even like students backgrounds, what they have to cope with at home ... you've got to have in your mind that sometimes at home they've a really hard time, it's easy to ... you know when they come in fed up and start letting off steam, there's a reason for it ...

**Sabina Maule**: And it's not personal, it's not directed at you ...

**Jane Hamilton**: No, that's right, they've got a lot of problems at home and I think you've got to understand that when maybe you're not getting the feedback you want from the kids, they're not doing as they're told, their response. You've got to keep thinking there are problems at home.

They explained that with past projects, he may have felt that he did not receive the feedback he would have liked from pupils. They reassured him that a child's background can have a large impact upon their ability to learn and that the artist should not necessarily assume that the project itself was a failure.

**Effective CPD**

One of the teachers, Anna Turnbull, felt that the way the project had been organised was an extremely effective model for CPD:

**Anna Turnbull**: I think it is a fantastic model and more training should be done like that because I think it is important to have that amount of time and to be able to do your own experimentation with a project before you actually deliver it with somebody else.

The structure of the project seemed to provide a model of good practice. The project ran over about six months and began with two sets of intensive workshops between artists and teachers where they learnt how to use the digital media tools. The teachers then planned with the artists how they were going to deliver the projects in the classroom. The individual teachers then started the projects off in the schools and the artists spent three days working in the schools.

Sabina Maule noted that because the first set of workshops had established a working relationship between the artists and teachers, this would make it easier when the artists came to work with them in schools.
Inter-school progression/feeder school interaction

As already noted, Glendale Middle School and Tweedmouth Middle School are both feeder schools for Berwick High School. At the start of the project the teachers were asked about the feeder relationships between their schools and whether they wanted to initiate further collaboration. Hamilton High School and Turnbull Middle School felt developing such relationships would be beneficial:

Jane Hamilton: We’d know what each other had covered and what we still had to cover … There are meetings every so often in the year, but you don’t get a lot of contact time.

As the project progressed, teachers seemed to be thinking about how pupils could develop their digital media skills. Hamilton felt that greater knowledge about what aspects had been covered in middle school could help her:

Jane Hamilton: So if they’ve done some with you, then when they come up, and we’re going to do it in Year 9, that was that, but because otherwise they need to learn those things in Year 9 if they’re going to do it for GCSE, because there’s not that time to spend on it, but by that time they’ve got a project to get through very quickly.

Sabina Maule: Then at the end of the project obviously we’d have a film showing and possibly even created a DVD that they could take away, because the Year 8s are going up to the high school next year, and that would be either as a year group or possibly as a whole school. And Jane and Pauline were saying about they quite like the idea of the children doing this because it may have more children switched on to doing the photography or film side of art, and go on to do GCSE.

Practical suggestions about how schools might work together

The teacher made a number of suggestions about how they might work together across schools. The high school teacher suggested that some of her Year 13 pupils could come down to work with some pupils from one of the middle schools. Turnbull discussed the possibility of pooling equipment between the schools, although all the teachers noted the difficulty in managing this in terms of cameras being broken etc.

At the end of the project all the teachers noted how they had developed relationships with staff from the different schools. Below is a representative comment:

Sabina Maule: Yes, very positively it was really good to put names to faces I liaise with at the high school because we’re a feeder to the high school so when we have meetings we know we’ve got common interests.

Towards the end of the projects the teachers from the middle schools were asked whether participating in the project had informed them about the development of the Art and Design curriculum and way digital media is taught in high school. After participating in the project, Sabina Maule seemed to be more aware of the curriculum offered at the high school and commented on how she stressed this to her pupils:

Sabina Maule: It has made me very much aware that art is a GCSE and to encourage the children to take it as an option when they go, so I’m able to speak to my children about it. And the fact that photography is an aspect of GCSE, which I didn’t know before and the children didn’t know, but now they’re looking at art in a different way – they’re not just thinking about it as painting and drawing.

Maule described how she intended to work further with teachers from the high school, whilst Turnbull also noted how the project had highlighted links with ICT across the curriculum:

Sabina Maule: I’m a feeder school to the high school and I can give my children a taste of filmmaking, photography and hopefully some sound. And I’m certainly going to work across the curriculum with their teachers as well, in Year 8 … I’m going to do English, we’re going to do play scripts and videography …

Anna Turnbull: And certainly at our school, I mean ICT is very high on the agenda, and we’re supposed to cover it in all of the subjects, and it’s a way of broadening my vision of how it can be brought into art. And bits of it fed into what I do already, but long term to do some kind of stand alone film/video/whatever – project.

Jane Hamilton also commented that the project had increased her knowledge of the transition for pupils from middle to high school. In this way, the project seems to have eased the
transition from middle to high school from a curricular perspective. This supports Galton et al.’s (1999) assertion that efforts to ease the transition from primary to secondary school should be focused on the curriculum and accompanying pedagogy. The authors note, as previously mentioned, that normally initiatives focus on improving administrative arrangements.

Towards the end of the project in school, Turnbull was again asked whether the project had developed her knowledge of the development in the Art and Design curriculum regarding digital media. Whilst the project had not greatly informed Turnbull’s knowledge, she felt that it was useful knowing that Hamilton would be teaching a similar project in the high school:

Anna Turnbull: [The project has] not necessarily changed my knowledge but it has shown me that there is now a transition process, because there is a link between this project and what they will go on to do at some point in high school.

The project has developed relationships between staff from schools with feeder relationships. Because all of the teachers involved in this project will teach pupils how to create an animated film, for this particular cohort of pupils, their skills will hopefully develop as they progress to the high school. If this continues beyond the current academic year, hopefully both pupil and teacher skills will improve.

Impact upon the curriculum and pupils and teachers’ learning dynamics
One of the teachers from Berwick High School felt that the project had widened her knowledge of Art and Design and broadened what she would be able to teach:

Jane Hamilton: Well for me, it’ll certainly be a way for me to develop my own art from being just two-dimensional and three-dimensional, and now it can be moving, which is even more exciting. Because before I had done sculptures with sound in them, but this time I can do sculpture, sound and movement … as a teacher we want to offer a wider range of different mediums for the children to work with, because it’s very tunnelled I think, at the moment, well mainly because of the restraints of materials that you have. Health and safety is another thing.

During the course of the workshops, the teacher from the high school noted that she would be interested in offering a film and photography AS (Advanced Subsidiary Level, the first part of the current UK Advanced Level Qualification). As the project progressed, she discussed this with her head of department, but at the time of writing, this had not been formalised. She commented on her reasons for wanting to include this element:

Interviewer: Are you still planning to ask your head of department whether you can introduce a film module?

Teacher: She’s keen, yes, we discussed it on Thursday, that we think it would be best to do it with Year 9s when they come in, because we wanted to get … because they make their decision of what subjects they’re going to do … So if we can engage the boys more, we’ve got lots of girls doing art but the girls seem to drop out, so we thought if we could engage them in film, the boys I think would be more interested in going out and doing videos and animation and things like that and it might encourage them to take art. But we can certainly carry it on all the way through, once they’ve decided to do GCSE.

Towards the end of the project after the artist had worked for two days with the teachers in school and the children had nearly finished making their individual animations, Sabina Maule described the learning experience. She described both pupils and herself as learning how to use Movie Maker software:

Sabina Maule: We’re on a learning curve with the software … I’ve learnt loads.

She described that a lot of the children had already used this software at home when creating videos to upload onto YouTube (10). Thus informal learning happening in the children’s leisure time contributed to the formal learning in the classroom and vice versa. She felt that going through the software with the children enhanced their understanding of the package:

Sabina Maule: Movie Maker is something a lot of kids had used independently at home because YouTube is very popular, and it [the taught project] formalises their knowledge actually and I discovered that although a lot of them know their way around Movie Maker, a lot of them
don’t know how to apply effects etc, so as they are learning ... so the quality of videos on YouTube should improve.

All three teachers felt that the children had gained a lot from working with the artists:

**Sabina Maule:** [There were] all sorts of ideas which the children responded to really well. For example, one person’s film involved a complicated set and the artist explained how to make something look three-dimensional, as if it was in the distance – done very simply by narrowing the road, making it into a triangle – and they really took that on board, they said, ‘The artist told us how to do that and it worked’ ... they were really pleased.

**Anna Turnbull:** I think having an artist working with them has been more inspiring for them and I think it has made them put that bit of extra effort into what they have done and it has made them make the effort to gel, to work together more in a group, than they would have done normally, so I think having that outside person to focus on gives them that [sense of] wanting to do well really.

This suggests that working with professionals specialising in their subject area enhanced the learning experience for pupils. Pupils seemed to value the artists’ practical knowledge and were inspired to work cooperatively with other pupils for them.

Neil Bromwich praised the way the teacher had prepared the students for the project. He felt that the pupils were engaged by the project:

**Neil Bromwich:** [I have been impressed with the] range and the inventiveness that has gone into the work – much of which was down to Anna’s pre-preparation beforehand – the visual material is really very strong in lots of cases. You start to see the excitement I think as people start to see things that are inanimate start to animate themselves, and all of a sudden it’s like, ‘Oh wow, look at this’, and the concentration and enthusiasm has really fed back into the project.

The artist discussed his role as an artist within an educational context and noticed the importance of exhibiting the films in an exhibition gave the project a sense of purpose for the pupils:

**Neil Bromwich:** [As an artist] you’re bringing in this aspect that makes something real to them. You know it is not just another lesson – you’re actually working with someone who is an artist, who really does make films, and actually, ‘We’re going to make a film’, and, ‘We’re really going to have an exhibition’, so all of a sudden they can see an application to what they’re doing, which I think makes a big difference.

Anna Turnbull described what she felt the impact of the project upon pupils would be in the longer term:

**Anna Turnbull:** Long term it is giving them a new set of skills that they can take to a higher level or doing something more adventurous in high school within video or film or any digital media really.

Teachers were asked whether they would continue to develop the skills that they had learnt and use them in the future. Anna Turnbull felt that she would be using skills gained during the project in the future:

**Anna Turnbull:** Oh definitely, and I’d feel more confident to repeat the project without necessarily having an artist here. I don’t think the outcomes would be as good as with the artist’s input, but I could still deliver the same project again.

She also intended to develop her skills further:

**Anna Turnbull:** Yes, I need to and I’ve enjoyed working with it, so yeah. I now feel fairly confident working with the software that we have used for this project so I would do more work using the same software.

Sabina Maule also noted that she would be interested in developing her skills if she had the time. Jane Hamilton had been practising the skills she had learnt in her own free time and felt that she would continue to develop these skills.

Anna Turnbull felt that it was important that digital media was part of the Art and Design curriculum:

**Interviewer:** Why is it important to include digital media in the Art and Design curriculum?

**Anna Turnbull:** Because it is part of everything. I mean, every aspect of education is developing more, with more digital input into it, in the art world there’s more and more
digital art being produced. It is just technology that is infiltrating all areas of what we do really, so they need to know how to use it.

She described what she felt the effect of including digital media practice had on pupils’ art education:

Anna Turnbull: It gives them a greater range of skills to use and gives them more creative freedom.

The teachers described the elements of the project that the pupils had found challenging:

Sabina Maule: They found it quite challenging to come up with the story. Some of them couldn’t think of stories … Imagining something as a three-dimensional concept through a camera lens … Some of them are quite surprised at how things look through a lens, which is really good because it has altered their perspectives.

She felt that this difficulty had developed her pupils’ skills. Teachers often cited a lack of equipment as a problem as well. Sabina Maule had difficulties showing the animation to the whole class:

Sabina Maule: I have got an overhead projector, but I don’t have an interactive whiteboard and I don’t have blinds on my window, so looking at it is very difficult, you can’t see – to try watching videos in there, it’s very difficult.

Anna Turnbull noted that the problems occurred when the equipment did not work and Jane Hamilton noted the problem of sharing two cameras between the whole class, and felt that the project had taken longer than anticipated.

In terms of outcomes for pupils, all the teachers felt that pupils had produced successful results that they were pleased with:

Sabina Maule: There’s a great spectrum of quality of films – some of them are very poor and some of them are very deep – which is what you would expect.

Towards the end of the project, Sabina Maule noted that the boys had been particularly engaged. At the beginning of the project she felt that using film would be a way to engage boys:

Sabina Maule: The boys have loved it especially when they’ve put the credits and the titles on, they’ve loved seeing their creation animated.

This is interesting in terms of improving boys’ achievement, as discussed in the theoretical frameworks (section p121). Here, the use of digital media seems to have encouraged the boys, in line with the 2003 Ofsted report Boys’ Achievement in Secondary Schools:

Their motivation can be enhanced by giving them greater access to computers for interactive learning.

Boys were well motivated by the range of learning styles and enjoyed using ICT equipment, solving problems and working in small groups and on their own (Ofsted 2003: 21).

Neil Bromwich noted some of the difficulties associated with delivering a digital media project, for example, because the pupils were working in groups:

Neil Bromwich: When everything is narrowed down onto a computer screen and you’ve got groups, you do notice that you’ve got certain characters who are dominating handling the computers. There’s always this pressure to finish the project and to let those who are good at computers carry on doing that bit, and other people who are good at making things or writing storyboards to do other things, rather than rotate people and force them to get more of a rounded learning experience. But I do think that with the amount of time that we had, linked with the fact that we are looking for outcomes that can be delivered in for the Berwick Film Festival, which is obviously very exciting for the students, has meant that perhaps some people have hogged computers and some people have not had as much access. But I do think that working like a true TV production company, people have gravitated towards their specialisms which they are comfortable with and that is also a comfortable learning experience.

The artist felt that collaborations between artist using new media and schools was important:

Neil Bromwich: Particularly with the growth of digital media, it does require that knowledge to be filtered back into the education system. So as artists who are working very much in the front line of new media [and] new technology, as things come out you pick them up and play around with them. So I
see it as important to keep those connections between front-end users and the education system, so there is a two-way flow between knowledge and seeing it be applied, because I've learnt a lot from seeing how the children work because there's just this freshness and immediacy with the actual medium that you just want to be reminded of as an artist. You know it doesn't have to take ten weeks to deliver a project, sometimes things can be done in a couple of hours, or ten hours, so that's great. So I think that if the project can have a long term application then I think it would be really beneficial to both the educational establishments and the artists.

Workshops were designed to aid collaboration. For example, different workshops were tailored to the needs of both artists and teachers, ensuring that different professional perspectives were recognised. As part of the programme, sufficient time was scheduled into the week so that artists and teachers could plan together. The relationships that developed between teachers from different schools aided knowledge about the progression of the Art and Design curriculum from middle to high school.

Two teachers felt that introducing a digital media project was an effective way of engaging male pupils. This was especially pertinent to the high school, as fewer boys than girls take Art and Design GCSE. However, due to the time frame of this research, it is impossible to say whether this project will affect the take-up of Art and Design GCSE by male pupils.

All of the teachers felt that they were able to deliver a project involving software packages that they had not used before participating in the project. All teachers and artists felt that the resultant projects were stimulating for their pupils. Teachers felt that pupils benefitted from working with artists as they brought practical expertise. The visits to the films in the film festival prompted discussion and inspired teachers and pupils. One teacher took her pupils to see the films and felt that it helped introduce the idea to them that different viewers interpret works differently. This in turn helped some pupils when producing their own animations to think about simply presenting their ideas and allowing the audience to draw their own conclusions. Additionally, knowing that their finished films were going to be shown in the Berwick Gymnasium Gallery was a motivating factor for pupils.

At the time of writing, it is too early to say what the long term impact upon teaching of digital media might be. It is unlikely that the teachers involved will get an opportunity to train further.

Teachers put forward various ideas to aid future collaboration. For example, it was suggested that pupils from the high school could visit and help pupils at the middle schools, and that digital media equipment could be pooled. However, these are yet to be implemented.

Also there was talk of introducing a film element to the AS and A2 photography at the high school.

Conclusion

The teachers and artists both formed an effective community of practice that participants found productive and stimulating. The dynamics of the group seemed to work well from the offset, as all participants had open attitudes and were willing to share their expertise. Everyone involved in this project invested in the whole process and it has to be borne in mind that it is not always possible to guarantee, predict or control group chemistry. The community of practice extended beyond the formal requirements of the workshops as teachers and artists met up in their free time to run through software packages before using them with their pupils.

The following quotations show how important the networking opportunity had been for the teachers. It also highlights the importance of projects such as this in reaching participants in rural areas:

**Sabina Maule:** One thing that I have found is that I've made contacts, I've learnt about equipment, even just asking where to buy that paper, and one of my colleagues is getting me a lead, and the chap from the Gymnasium Gallery came in, that's another name, another contact, so it's really ... networking has been very useful actually.

**Jane Hamilton:** You find out what's going on, because we are a bit on a sort of ... out on a limb up here in Berwick aren't we? So it is good to know what's going on, Newcastle, up here and all over I guess.

The way that the project was structured offers an example of good practice in terms of formalising a community of practice.
Recommendations

- This particular project has developed a successful community of practice and it would be valuable for participants to continue working together. The same artists could work with the same teachers to continue to develop digital media projects to be taught in schools, continuing to develop the pupils' digital media skills and lessening the likelihood of skills being lost.

- The structure of the project was felt to be effective by those involved and both artists and teachers felt that they learnt a lot from each other. It is suggested that this was an example of good working practice that could be followed elsewhere. The following elements seemed to contribute to the success of the project: the six-month duration of the project seemed an appropriate timescale; the initial intensive workshops seemed to be an effective way of introducing teachers to digital media/specialist skills whilst all the artists were on-hand; co-planning between artists and teachers to deliver projects in the classroom brought both together; the fact that teachers started the projects in the schools and artists came to assist later was an efficient way of maximising the artists' time; the final showing of work in an art gallery setting motivated pupils.

- The structure, organisation and aims of the project optimised the potential for a group of teachers and artists to work together. Because the workshops were tailored to suit the needs of both, this helped the group recognise and respect the cultural specificity of both professions. Given the success of this particular model of practice, it is suggested that this model might be followed elsewhere.

- Because the project required teachers to volunteer to participate, the schools and teachers who took up the opportunity were already likely to be interested in providing a rich Art and Design curriculum and interested in keeping abreast of developments in technology. To enable all schools to access such opportunities, CPD opportunities should be provided on a larger scale and could perhaps be delivered as part of the ICT curriculum.

- When delivering projects involving participants from different professions, it is useful to provide, where possible, information in forms that can be used and referenced. For example, the teachers noted that they were used to using worksheets, so for this particular group, information handouts would have been useful.

- Teachers noted problems with a lack of equipment and software. They found free software invaluable. When schools are buying equipment, it is necessary that they consult teachers and that teachers are trained to be able to use the resources they already have.

References


**Notes**


3. www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.13049

4. www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/


8. www.coastart.org/updates/zn_up_1.htm


11. YouTube is a video sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips.
NORTH WEST LIVERPOOL CLUSTER RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by FACT, folly and Cornerhouse in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Liverpool John Moores University and the commissioned artist.

Final report by Sandra Hiett, Liverpool John Moores University in collaboration with trainee teachers (LMJU), Karen Hickling, Laura Sillars (FACT), Sarah Perks, Marisa Draper (Cornerhouse), Clare Gannaway (folly), Simon Robertshaw (International Centre for Digital Content), Sara Maguire (Connexions), Deborah Chan (coordinator) and Dan Fox (commissioned artist).
Virtual Lives: Introduction

This project emerged out of agendas and concerns shared between the five participating organisations across four institutions, all of which develop work with new technologies and with young people in the North of England. In different ways, each is involved in the dissemination of contemporary art that uses new media and all are engaged in educational activities with individuals, groups and the wider community, both on and off site.

Each of the participating centres had strong pre-existing working relationships with at least one of the other institutions and most had previously established links with several of the partners in this project. The group, however, had no prior experience of working together as a whole. Individual constraints of geography and time presented significant challenges for the project. Communication through virtual sites (base camp) and periodic face-to-face encounters (usually workshops) have contributed to this report and to the project as a whole.

Having established a strong working relationship through this research project there is a firm commitment across the team to continue to work collaboratively on further projects. The sharing of expertise, facilities, artist networks, mutual support and the extending opportunities for young people has enriched this work and offers great potential for the future.

The project took place between September 2006 and January 2008 and had two distinct stages: stage 1 starting in September 2006, ran until March 2007, and stage 2 continued from March until January 2008. The project involved fourteen young people in total, although never more than twelve at any one time during either stage. Research developed by twelve trainee teachers in stage 1 was extended and developed by six trainee teachers in stage 2. Key members of staff from each of the five organisations took part in both stages, although there was some necessary change in personnel in organisational teams because of the nature of short-term contracts and associated funding. There was, however, a core team that saw the project through from inception to completion, giving a sense of continuity and stability throughout - and with the potential to extend this work in the future.

The overarching question driving this project has been, ‘How can we develop a better understanding of the new media technologies being used by the young people of today, and how could this information influence and challenge the long-term programming of media arts organisations?’ Further questions emerged from the research. Stage 1 was particularly concerned with issues of voice and looking for ways of giving young people an authentic voice in developing opportunities for them within new media arts education. Stage 2 was concerned largely with facilitating young people to act upon their collective voice, meeting their professional development needs in taking a lead role in developing and realising a project from initial idea, to commissioning an artist to work and curating of the final work.

This paper argues that young people’s new media capabilities are more sporadic and diverse than current rhetoric would imply. Giving young people a voice in the programming of new media art education requires a substantial shift in established practices and roles. Collaboration between the participating organisations was essential if this project was to be sustained, given that no one organisation could have fulfilled all the needs or provided the personnel necessary for it to be successful across the timescale. Opportunities for young people to make creative decisions and pursue an engagement with new media art at the highest level was made possible through cross-institution collaboration. This research claims that there is significant scope for extending this model to schools and colleges as well as offering a way forward for the now-established project team.

Research aims and objectives

This project evolved to give young people a greater voice in the content and delivery of new media arts education across the collective organisations taking part. More specifically, the project aims of stage 1 were:

- to deliver a deeper understanding of young people’s technological skills and application
- to develop working practices that use as a starting point the technical language of the young people with whom we work (as opposed to us ‘teaching’ them)
- to develop shared approaches to good practice across a digitally rich and experimental region
In stage 2 these aims were extended:

- to develop a model that allows young people and the organisations to learn more about each other by working together
- for young people to take a lead role in the decision-making and development of their engagement with the organisations involved
- to use new media technology effectively and creatively with young people
- to challenge traditional approaches to working with young people and be innovators within the field
- to investigate how young people’s opportunities to engage with new media differs between new media arts organisations and school

Young people’s brief: stage 2
The evaluation of stage 1 identified a need for the project team to relinquish a large part of the decision-making but also recognised the need for structure and pace within the activity. The project team decided to give young people autonomy over their project in the second stage and to set them a brief. The residential three-day programme at the start of this stage ensured that there was plenty of time for the group to get to know each other and let their ideas develop rapidly through a prolonged exposure to new ideas and opportunities. In addition, the project team was on hand to consult, and new media artists were invited to share their work and provide short workshops throughout the event.

The young people were allocated £5,000 with the clear understanding that this would need to cover all their expenses, including travel, refreshments, materials, hire of equipment, technical and artistic support etc. The group were informed that their project could be about developing a product, activity or commission, giving them as much freedom as possible to develop their ideas and concepts, but with the expectation that it would needed to be ambitious and challenging.

The objectives for the young people were:

- to develop and carry out a media arts project as a group of twelve young people based across the North West of England
- to organise the project themselves, including how to communicate with each other; how to spend the budget; and what to create
- to create something that might contribute to the future education programmes of the participating organisations (something that other young people might use, for example)
- to recruit artists and/or technicians or anyone else necessary to achieve the project
- to obtain the resources to complete the project within the budget
- to carry out evaluation and dissemination of the project

The objectives for the organisation were different but closely related:

- for the organisations and young people to work together, sharing skills and resources effectively
- for young people to come to our venues to work with us on their own terms
- for there to be a creative engagement with new technologies for the development of young people in relation to their aspirations
- for young people to be empowered to organise their own project(s)
- for innovation within new media arts education at the highest level
The wider context

Underlying theoretical perspectives
Theoretical perspectives, such as Popcorn’s concept of ‘cocooning’ (c. 1990) and Prensky’s (2001) ‘digital natives’, have contributed to the creation of certain mythologies surrounding the new media capabilities of today’s young people. Hanman (2005) suggests that the digital age has driven young people into their bedrooms, living in isolated reality while actively engaging in virtual worlds. Contact with friends being continuously available from these electronic bunkers through electronic means without parental intervention or supervision, alter egos are created and evolved to sophisticated levels, we are led to believe, while real-life personas are left under-developed and immature.

The breakdown of the family unit is further fragmented, it is supposed, through the self-imposed isolation of the teenage population, exaggerating the generation gap between young people and their parents, exacerbating the opportunities for individualism and conflict. Obsessive tendencies, unhealthy levels of introspection and a lack of social skills are associated with Popcorn’s claims of behavioural trends among young people within the developed world. Prensky’s (2001) division between those that have grown up with new media technologies (digital natives) and those that have adopted these in adult life (digital immigrants) encourages attitudes of social distinction between these two groups. Arguing that young people have developed different thinking and language patterns from preceding generations, Prensky claims that significant problems arise when ‘digital immigrants’ attempt to develop an appropriate curriculum for ‘digital natives’.

The proliferation of new media technologies
Evidence of new media technologies proliferate in the Western world. Paul (2003) describes the 1990s as a ‘technological development of unprecedented speed’, while Tribe and Jana (2006) talk of the 1990s as the era of the ‘.com boom’. Manovich (2001 p. 20), on the other hand, resists defining the present moment as the Digital Age, arguing that ‘new media represents a convergence of two separate historical trajectories’ – computing and media technologies – that both have their origins in the 1830s. Casual observation, however, reveals that email, the internet and the digital image have become commonplace tools in recent years. These tools are used across generational groups, from ‘early years’ to ‘the third age’, among professionals and amateurs alike.

The role of galleries and arts organisations
There is a long tradition of contemporary artists appropriating new media technologies, subverting them and applying them in unorthodox contexts as part of the creative evolutionary cycle. Galleries and arts organisations play a vital role in supporting and showcasing ground-breaking work, and providing access to a wider audience. FACT, Cornerhouse, folly and LJMU are just some of those institutions that actively support new media arts innovation but are examples of leaders in their fields.

Supporting audience participation is a significant role of public galleries and arts organisations with many providing educational support, workshops and interpretation for a wide spectrum of visitors and participants. Modern art and contemporary practices are often criticised as elitist, and cutting-edge new media arts work can be particularly challenging for audiences and arts educators alike. Highly successful and established models for de-mystifying works of art and accessing artists employed by arts organisations and galleries are often undervalued and unsung. More recently, however, these have given a greater profile through designated organisations such as engage
Research context

There is recognition among the project team that new media arts educators can find themselves teaching to the converted: ‘new tools’ may not be quite as new for the young people as they are for other participants. The issues that this raises for artists, arts venues and educationalists providing new media education for young people are important and relevant to all the institutions represented within this study.

The particular perspectives and rationale for each of the five institutions are related but distinct and are set out below.

FACT (Foundation for Art and Creative Technology)
FACT is the UK’s leading organisation for the commissioning and presentation of film, video and new media art forms. Founded in 1988 (formerly known as Moviola), FACT has commissioned and presented over 100 digital media artworks and artists, including Mark Wallinger, Barbara Kruger, Tony Oursler and Isaac Julien. FACT exists to inspire and promote the artistic significance of film, video and new and emerging media. FACT believes not only in the ability of individuals and communities to express themselves creatively but also in the value of them being able to see themselves reflected in the world around them. The FACT centre hosts four cinemas, two exhibition spaces, a media lounge and a media lab, two artist digital workspaces and a transition suite.

FACT’s collaboration programme has an almost fifteen-year history of working with the most disadvantaged in society to develop their participation in the arts. FACT believes that everyone is entitled to access to cultural activity, and that through the process of working with artists to create new work, lives can be changed, skills and capabilities can be developed, and new opportunities opened up for all those taking part.

FACT has a track record for ground-breaking practice, putting cutting-edge creative technologies into the hands of those who have previously had little or no access to them. Participants develop confidence, raise their expectations, learn new creative, critical, technical and communication skills, and often establish new social networks and support structures that sustain way beyond the life of the project itself. By working in partnership with community organisations (from grass-roots charities to
regeneration agencies) FACT ensures that its work is relevant and appropriate; supports their objectives; and creates a legacy of skills and experience that continues to develop after the conclusion of projects.

FACT’s commitment to the Virtual Lives project stems from its developing programme dedicated to young people. In 2005–2006 FACT appointed an education manager and young people’s programme manager to develop the long-term capacity of its work with young people both outside and within the formal education system. FACT is committed to creating new forms of collective learning and expression, tools and platforms for self-expression. The findings of this research project will inform the development of future content and delivery of the young people’s film and music, project workers’ and teachers’ forums, gallery workshops, CPD, new tools courses and designated projects.

**Cornerhouse**

Cornerhouse is Manchester’s international centre for contemporary visual arts and film. Located in the heart of the city, it has three floors of contemporary art galleries, three screens showing the best of independent cinema, a bar, a café and a bookshop. Cornerhouse also operates Cornerhouse Publications, an international distribution service for visual arts books and catalogues.

Cornerhouse has a clear, strong and ongoing commitment to working with young people through LiveWire, its education peer-led project for fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds who want to work with experienced artists and filmmakers. Film, art and multi-technology projects and events run throughout the year and are free.

Cornerhouse’s investment in the Visual Lives project reflects its active interest in research into how young people’s digital experience can be used as a platform for the development of educational activity. Cornerhouse is committed to developing strong working links with peer organisations and to undertaking crucial research into new areas of cultural and educational enquiry. Cornerhouse wishes to participate in, and support, practice-led research that challenges the modes of traditional gallery education and the exploration of differing modes of communication and interpretation of technology-based and interactive artworks.

**Folly**

Based in Lancaster and Staveley, Cumbria, folly is the project’s only media-arts-specific organisation; it provides for local, regional, international and online audiences, folly works with artists and audiences to deliver a distributed artistic programme across a range of media, which includes: the still and moving digital image, sound, animation and online works. In addition, folly supports the development of new and emerging media, such as GPS, FRID, moblogging etc.

As a non-venue-based organisation, folly has developed a distributed method of delivery that involves initiating touring and bespoke workshop programmes, finding new models of engaging the public beyond the ‘conventional’ gallery/project space.

Folly’s education programme aims to address the needs of arts delivery in remote and dispersed geographical areas. Folly targets people living in culturally under-served areas of Lancashire and Cumbria who have difficulty in visiting galleries, contemporary arts venues and art centres because of their location and the cost of transport. Educational projects are delivered in partnership with other arts organisations, schools, universities and community centres; they target a wide variety of audiences, including artists, young people, community groups, schools, community leaders, etc.

In September 2005 folly embarked on an ambitious capital project to develop a new fit-for-purpose presentation lab and media lab – due for completion in 2008.

With the development of projects such as digi-deluxe, digi-club and online workshops folly is committed to researching and developing ways of sustaining young people’s engagement beyond bespoke project delivery. The findings of this research project will inform the development of these initiatives.
Liverpool John Moores University

LJMU makes two distinct contributions to this research project through the International Centre for Digital Content (ICDC) and the faculty of Education, Community and Leisure (ECL). Whilst there are clear overarching aims and values shared by these two teams within the university, their involvement within the Virtual Lives project are discrete and distinct. Thus, for the sake of clarity, they are represented here as separate contributors.

International Centre for Digital Content

ICDC is part of Liverpool John Moores University and a world leader in digital content solutions. The centre is funded by the European Regional Development Fund, as well as the North West Development Agency, to support in a variety of ways the region’s digital industries.

ICDC’s mission is to create a strong digital content industry in the north west of England by transferring the skills and knowledge from inside the organisation to a wider public. ICDC concentrates not just on new technologies, but how it can be applied in new and exciting ways.

ICDC’s involvement to the Virtual Lives project comes as a direct consequence of its recent development of ‘The Automatic’, an innovative lab situated on the Liverpool digital technology park, designed to facilitate and stimulate creative thought. An exciting and dynamic environment, the custom-built facility is equipped to engage users in problem-solving, scenario-planning, creative thinking and team building. ICDC has huge potential to support interactive work with young people, and wishes to share good practice and its specialist knowledge of culturally specific projects with partner institutions.

Faculty of Education, Community and Leisure

The ECL at LJMU includes the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the nationally acclaimed Artist–Teacher MA. The initial teacher training aspect of primary, secondary and tertiary education programmes at LJMU – both at undergraduate and postgraduate level – is located in ECL.

Art Education at LJMU has a strong national profile both for developing innovative practice and for its success in engaging with contemporary art and new media practices across all its courses. Strong working relationships with the cultural industries, locally and nationally, are a hallmark of this provision.

Action research and reflective practice are at the core of all educational courses at LJMU, where tutors and students take an active part in curriculum development and practitioner enquiry research as an integral part of the taught programme at all levels. This faculty will support the project through expertise in research methodologies, data collection and analysis.

Individuals involved in the research included:

Trainee teachers

Trainee teachers on the Art and Applied Art Postgraduate Certificate of Education courses are experts within their specialist field, many with several years’ experience of the cultural and new media industries. Trainee teachers are selected at interview for their potential contribution to curriculum development. Schools are currently in need of contemporary practitioners with confidence, vision and expertise in new technologies and media practices within the visual arts. In September 2006 thirty-five trainees enrolled on the Art and Applied Art PGCE, of which thirteen have specialist experience of new-media-based arts practice. In September 2007 an additional thirty-one trainees joined the programme.

In stage 1 twelve trainees, with specialist knowledge in graphic illustration, digital image manipulation, photography, filmmaking, animation and computer-aided design were selected to take part in the research project. Trainees in this phase worked with a new media artist to analyse online sites frequented by young people; interviewed the young people taking part in the Virtual Lives project; and reflected upon their findings in light of the implications for their continuing professional development. These trainees chose to present their findings in the form of a blog (http://virtual-lives.blogspot.com).

In stage 2 six trainees volunteered to extend the research undertaken in stage 1 and in particular investigated how young people outside the Virtual Lives project use new media in and out of the classroom and considered the implications for developing a contemporary art curriculum in schools.
Young People
The twelve young people involved in stages 1 and 2 volunteered as a result of their participation in existing groups established at FACT, Cornerhouse and folly. The young people, aged between fourteen and twenty-two, had already taken part in projects with their associated arts organisation, having built up a relationship of trust with key people within the respective delivery teams.

The young people are the core focus of this project, taking part in semi-structured interviews, workshops and discussion forums, and completing questionnaires and informal evaluations. The young people from the different venues had not met or worked together previously, so Saturday activities at ICDC and Cornerhouse in stage 1 provided the opportunity for all participants to come together.

Clearly evident in stage 1 was the need to develop a group identity and working relationship. Stage 2 therefore began with a three-day residential event with one dedicated day in each of the three geographic locations. This gave the young people (and the project team) greater insight into each other’s environment and a greater opportunity to understand what each organisation had to offer. This was to be vital support for the young people in their role as decision-makers because it enabled them to work from a more informed position.

Theoretical framework
Established models of new media arts education
The participating organisations identified three key working models of arts education within their collective practices:

- interpretative-discursive
- responsive-productive
- artist-led production models

These represent the dominant models used by the participating institutions in their delivery of existing programmes. All the institutions subscribe to the practices represented within these broad definitions, although individual organisations have specific ways of articulating the educational models they use. In stage 1 the project team recognised that a fourth model was significantly absent – one that gave the participants a role in determining the nature of their engagement with the organisation. An additional model was been developed in stage 2, therefore, identified here as the participant-led model.

Interpretative-discursive model
The interpretative-discursive model is used predominantly within the gallery context to engage the audience with original works of art. A member of the gallery education team or freelance artist will usually structure, lead and manage this type of workshop. Often using key phrases or word association, participants are invited to make personal connections with the artworks and installations. This kind of participation is particularly successful in helping the audience to relate to unfamiliar and alien concepts. While individuals may have hostile feelings towards more challenging works in the gallery, the interpretative-discursive model draws out personal associations and perceptions that inform new levels of understanding. This model celebrates multiple readings and plural perspectives, and has the flexibility to work with audiences of different levels of knowledge and experience.
Responsive-productive model

The responsive-productive model involves a practical engagement in response to a given stimulus. This is likely to be delivered by gallery education staff or freelance artists. If the stimulus is work in the gallery, the introduction often takes the form of the interpretative-discursive model followed by a related workshop using similar materials, techniques or concepts. These workshops are targeted at group audiences: either closed groups (such as school groups booked in advance) that have a clearly structured time frame, or open groups (weekend visitors, for example) that are of a more transient nature. The responsive-productive model encourages playful and non-threatening engagement that is generally pitched at non-specialists, assuming no prior knowledge or skills. The emphasis is usually on the process and level of engagement. Individual or collaborative pieces of work may be produced but their status will clearly be secondary to the fact of participation.

Artist-led production model

The artist-led production model is usually associated with sustained activities that have expectations of a quality experience and successful product. This model is largely used for identified groups and may have external funding that influences the focus of the engagement. The emphasis with this model is on making and will often result in some from of presentation or published production. The focus of the programme will be consistent with the organisation's core agenda but may not necessarily relate specifically to other work on show or in process at that time. The artist will be selected because of his/her specialist knowledge, skills and experience, his/her explicit suitability for this particular project and his/her ability to sustain the work to completion.

These are the three predominant models used by FACT, Cornerhouse, folly and ICDC. In past practice these models have proved particularly successful within the terms of participants' satisfaction, institutional objectives and the proven reputation of each of the participating institutions to recruit and deliver highly successful programmes with young people. It is this proven track record that validates these organisations in their contribution to curricular development in new media arts education across the region.

In the context of this project, however, there is an underlying concern about the emphasis upon adult-led perspectives and institutional agendas that underpin current programming for new media arts education for young people. This project creates a critically reflective space to investigate these preferred models in practice and to consider future implications.

Participant-led model

The participant-led model, developed through this research project, gives participants a voice in identifying the form, content and delivery of the programme. It requires consultation time and a commitment from the organisation to be flexible, resourceful and dedicated to facilitating an organic and creative experience. This model requires participants to develop a cohesive approach to project development. In this case participants required support in developing new skills essential to the success of the project (i.e. writing a project proposal, creating an artist's brief, recruiting and interviewing artists, realising intentions, publicity and communication, and curatorship). The strength of this approach is its empowerment of participants and the development of their wider life skills and the deeper level of engagement it engenders, with the potential for exhibition standard work.

The delivery of this model involves challenges: the level of commitment and sustained motivation required by individual participants, the need for funding within the organisation to support the realisation of ideas, and the skills required by the project team to facilitate it effectively. This model was developed through a collaborative project and is likely to be more appropriate for cross-institutional collaborations: for instance, schools, colleges and community groups looking to extend their opportunities beyond the limitations of their specific location.
Collective strengths and opportunities for individual professional development
Designed to draw upon the specific strengths and expertise of each participant, this research project recognised, from the outset, an opportunity for individual professional and personal development through active participation. Project group members identified four areas that needed development that could also be addressed through collaborative practice and skills-sharing within the group:

1. an understanding of formal education in technology and computing for the fourteen to eighteen age group
2. an understanding of non-formal knowledge of technology and computing among the fourteen to eighteen age group
3. a working knowledge of action research methodologies
4. technical training in the use of specific platforms

During the timescale of the project, geographic and individual time constraints mitigated against whole-team meetings and virtual forums have thus been essential and integral to the management and progression of the project. 'Base Camp' has been the key form of communication between members of the core project team, while e-mail and face-to-face contact has been the main form of communication for the trainee teachers and associated artists. While e-mail and text messages have been important tools for keeping the young people informed and connected to the project, most of their decision-making and productive engagement was achieved face to face.

Research methodology
Using a qualitative framework and an action research methodology, this project is an example of participatory research. Every participant (young people, trainee teachers, artists, arts educators and new media specialists) took on the role of the researcher, to varying degrees. Taking into account both Stenhouse’s (1975) and Elliott’s (1996) approaches to curriculum development, the research set out to give voice to what is often among the least-heard groups in educational research, namely young people and trainee teachers.

Consistent with an action research methodology, the project has emerged organically, with each activity informing the next. Novice researchers have been mentored and supported by the more experienced in order to develop a research community among the wider group. This has been largely successful, although, to some extent, falls into a well-established pattern of over-reliance on HE academic support by the co-researchers within the team (Elliott 1991).

The project team and the trainee teachers were the most successful at collecting and sharing their research data – in the form of photographs, written evaluations and reflections.

The research aims and project structure was informed by the professional working knowledge of the participating arts educationalists at the four institutions but influenced particularly by the teams at FACT, Cornerhouse and folly. The young people, new media artists and trainee teachers joined the project after the funding had been secured.
Research Methods
This study employed a range of data-collection methods, including personal observations and reflections, digital diaries (audio recordings, digital photographs, digital video), questionnaires, interviews, interview transcripts and informal interim presentations of findings at key intervals.

The Automatic at ICDC provided an opportunity to gather data very quickly, simultaneous entries being input through the live distiller, which collates anonymous data on-screen and displays its findings as they are entered, making common trends and differences in responses immediately available to the entire group – indeed, as they are made. The advantage of this, as a data-collection tool, is its non-threatening nature and its accessibility. The data is entered digitally and therefore needs no transcribing. As the data is instantly available on the large screen for all participants to see, it is possible to build subsequent activities around the initial responses without delay.

Digital data provided an opportunity to gather a variety of evidence in different electronic formats: still images, video clips, word-processed and hand-written/drawn entries (through graphic tablets, for instance). The trainee teachers used a range of digital data-collection tools and selected a blog as the shared site for their collective entries. Uploading material directly onto the live site facilitated open access for all the participants within the project as it happened.

Questionnaires were devised by trainee teachers in stage 1. These were uploaded onto the blog site (http://virtual-lives.blogspot.com) as word-processed transcripts and as digital videos. Questionnaires were used as an alternative to face-to-face contact between the trainee teachers and the young people in an attempt to overcome difficulties of geography and time. In stage 2 questionnaires were developed collaboratively by the trainees and the lead researcher to identify a comparison in the new media capabilities of young people of the same age but not directly involved in the Virtual Lives project, and the opportunities for new media art engagement in schools. In addition, all the trainees undertook a review of literature and also noted their personal reflections in light of the project aims and their own aspirations as contemporary arts and early-career teachers.

At FACT and Cornerhouse the trainee teachers conducted semi-structured interviews with the young people. Most of these were filmed digitally and uploaded onto the blog site.

The advantage of a blog was its flexibility to present a range of data in different forms and the opportunity it afforded trainees and visitors to the site for dialogue, the intention being that it would trigger, and capture, reflective and critical responses. The final entry by the trainee teachers in stage 1 was a critical reflection of their involvement in the Virtual Lives project and how it had informed their practice. This was a key reference point for the trainee teachers in stage 2, who had no direct contact with those from stage 1.

The young people in stage 1 rejected the opportunity to create a shared platform because they saw little need to communicate with each other outside the programmed events. This was in direct contrast with the second stage of the project when the young people created a group email list so that they could develop the project between sessions.
Despite the fact that the young people chose periodic reflections as their preferred method of data collection in stage 2, they were much less successful than the trainee teachers in terms of gathering data. While all the young people were very happy to respond to requests for written and verbal feedback on their experiences during sessions, they lacked the self-motivation to maintain a research journal. A questionnaire was created and distributed at the end of the project to gather young people’s perceptions at this vital stage.

Base Camp was used throughout the project as an interactive interface for members of the project team to share information, reflect, raise issues and plan strategies. As the project developed so did communication through Base Camp and the resources pooled there. This was an essential element in keeping all the project team informed and active. In addition, it provided an excellent reference point for new members of the team who joined the project part-way through.

Selection of participants
The institutions were largely self-selecting, either building upon existing working relationships and previous collaborations or recognising the potential of their specific contribution to the promotion of innovative practice in new media arts and education.

Twelve young people within the fourteen to twenty-five age range were invited to take part, chosen from participants at existing workshops and/or projects at FACT, Cornerhouse or folly. Many of the young people involved in stage 2 had participated in stage 1; others found the sustained attendance of the extended timescale problematic (difficult to reconcile with Saturday jobs and family commitments) and they were replaced by three newcomers in stage 2. Interestingly, end-of-project questionnaires completed by the young people revealed that the departure of some of the first group resulted in the growth of a strong bond between the remaining members which, in turn, strengthened the sense of community. As one questionnaire noted, 'Not all people continued. It didn't matter; it just brought the group closer together.'

Twelve trainee teachers were selected by the PGCE route leader to participate in stage 1, based upon the degree specialism and/or work-related experience in new media arts practice (including film, photography, animation, graphic illustration, interior design, product design and digital installation) that they had presented at interview. This selection strategy proved problematic, however, as some trainee teachers resented their inclusion in the project. Despite some early negative comments among trainees, by the end of stage 1 they all felt that they had ultimately benefitted from being involved. In stage 2 trainees were invited to volunteer and this made a significant improvement to levels of commitment and engagement.

A project leader was appointed to maintain an overview of the project and to ensure good communication and time-keeping across all participants at all times. One of the project leader’s key roles was to report regularly to enquire on the progress of the Virtual Lives project. Additionally, the project leader played a significant role in keeping the project team active throughout the eighteen-month programme and ensuring that everyone was reminded of ongoing tasks and forthcoming events.

In stage 1, two new media artists were appointed to the project: one to work predominantly with the trainee teachers and another to work with the young people. The trainee teachers worked with a new media artist to survey online sites reported to be frequented by young people. They critically evaluated different types of online platforms for collating and sharing their data, and were supported in creating the final blog. The young people worked with a new media artist to engage creatively with a range of digital technologies around negotiated themes and tasks. This provided an opportunity to observe how young people approached a range of new technologies and to ask them to comment upon the experience.

In stage 2 young people were introduced to several new media artists within the three-day residential session to equip them with the necessary insight and experience to appoint their own choice of artist to support the making of their artwork.
Ethical considerations

From the outset good ethical practice was a key feature of this project for all the participating organisations with regard to all those involved, but particularly vis-à-vis the specific needs of young people in the research context.

Gaining consent from young people and their parents/guardians for all aspects of the project's documentation and publication was a strategy rigorously adopted. Continuous consultation among members of the group was also seen as important to ensure that all parties are satisfied with material representing them and their contribution to the project as a whole.

Given the focus of this research and the young people's voice in developing new media arts education programming, the views shared by young people has been credited to individuals within the blog site. Where appropriate, while confidentiality has been maintained, young people's accounts have been reported.

Preliminary findings were presented by each of the participating groups to each other at key times. This provided not only an opportunity for discussion and debate but also the re-drafting of visual and written accounts destined for the public domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 November 06</td>
<td>LJMU</td>
<td>Trainee teachers</td>
<td>PGCE art trainees and VL representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 January 07</td>
<td>FACT and video conferencing</td>
<td>Project coordinator and representatives of from all organisations</td>
<td>Project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 January 07</td>
<td>ICDC</td>
<td>Young people evaluate the day's workshops</td>
<td>Young people, artist and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 February 07</td>
<td>enquire conference, Sainsbury Centre</td>
<td>Project team</td>
<td>engage members and other enquire project representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 February 07</td>
<td>ICDC</td>
<td>Presentation of the trainee teachers' blog to young people</td>
<td>Young people, artist and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 March 07</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Project evaluator from the project team</td>
<td>All participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 March 07</td>
<td>Final draft of the project report circulated</td>
<td>Project evaluator from the project team</td>
<td>All participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 April 07</td>
<td>Final date for amendments and comments</td>
<td>All participants</td>
<td>Project coordinator and evaluator</td>
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</table>
### Stage 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29-31 August 07</td>
<td>Lake district, Liverpool and Manchester</td>
<td>Three-day residential event; project team in each venue and a variety of new media artists</td>
<td>Young people and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 September 07</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Young people developed project brief with the project team</td>
<td>Young people and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 October 07</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Developing artist's brief and interview questions</td>
<td>Young people and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 October 07</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Young people interviewed artists for post</td>
<td>Interviewees and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 October 07</td>
<td>Velocity festival visiting several venues along the Cumbrian coastal railway.</td>
<td>Clare Gannaway escorted the group to each venue and introduced exhibition and curatorial personnel in each venue</td>
<td>Young people and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 November 07 &amp; 24 November 07</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Young people working with Dan Fox (appointed artist) to develop body suit design</td>
<td>Young people, artist and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 December 07</td>
<td>FACT</td>
<td>Young people working with artist to record sound and image for body suit interface</td>
<td>Young people, artist and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 January 08</td>
<td>Cornerhouse</td>
<td>Artist to present 2 body suits and to trial/develop sound and image interface; project evaluation questionnaires</td>
<td>Young people and project team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 January 08</td>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Completion of final research report</td>
<td>All participants and engage</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 February 08</td>
<td>FACT</td>
<td>Trial body suits in the box</td>
<td>General public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2008 and beyond</td>
<td>Across venues</td>
<td>Exhibit 'Body Language' at various public venues</td>
<td>Exhibit 'Body Language' at various public venues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of findings

Understanding young people's use of technology
Prensky's technically omnivorous young people might exist within box-office fantasies such as Iain Softley's Hackers (1995) and the Wachowki Brothers' Matrix (1999) but the young people in this project proved to be more specific in their application of new media technologies and less easy to categorise. The new media capabilities among the young people ranged from those with some knowledge, who created their own blog sites and used subject-specific terminology with confidence, to those who were less experienced, with limited access to technology outside the project.

Young people's new media capabilities in stage 1
The young people reported that the technologies with which they were most familiar were mobile phones, MSN, internet, music, myspace and television. The differences between what the individuals used and how often, however, were wide-ranging.

The young people in this study sent between 10 and 200 texts per week; these were revealed to be predominantly sent to friends and sometimes to parents. While some of the group appeared to have unrestricted access, others reported that their use of their mobile phones was significantly restricted by their credit level.

The use of MSN was more differentiated, ranging from those who don't use it at all to several members of the group who reported that they have more than a hundred contacts in messenger (and in one case more than five hundred), and spend anything up to ninety-six hours a week on MSN.

Over half the group reported that they had a myspace account with between forty-five and upwards of three hundred contacts. Among the group, myspace accounts included features such as videos, music, pictures, sports news, games, bands and pets. Not all the young people had access to such accounts and one young person explained that they did not know how to set one up. Whether, if they knew how, they would want one was less clear. Those who did use myspace valued its interactive nature, and the opportunities it offers: for keeping in touch; finding out more about people they know; for creating profiles, for self-promotion; and as a place to meet people. Less favourable qualities were also identified, however: the opportunities it offers for people to lie, and hack into your account; the existence of online predators (i.e. paedophiles); and its addictive nature. The young people demonstrated political attitudes towards the commercial aspect of myspace and shared some negative views about the groups that own virtual spaces.

On the whole, the group were much less interested in television; two reported ownership of a computer but no television. More than half the group said that they watch less than seven hours television per week, but, at the other end of the scale, four of the young people reported that in the same period they had watched more than thirty hours.

Interviews between the trainee teachers and the young people revealed potential patterns and trends between popular blogs and web sites. Because several of the trainee teachers were less than twenty-six years old they could identify with the young people's use of new media. One trainee teacher reflected that her own preference for bebo rather than myspace was influenced by what was new and popular among her social group at her first point of access. Similar influences were apparent in the young people represented in this case study.

Young people's new media capabilities in stage 2
It was not possible to identify whether the new media capabilities of the young people involved in phase 1 was representative of the type of person likely to seek out activities with new media arts organisations or whether they were equivalent to those of young people of the same age generally. To clarify the situation, in stage 2 trainee teachers extended the consultation: twelve young people aged between eleven and eighteen as well as eleven teachers across six schools in the North West of England were asked about their new media habits. While drawing upon a relatively small sample, the findings were remarkably similar to those of the young people directly involved in the project: mobile phones, email, the internet, msn, digital gaming and digital television were the forms most commonly used on a regular basis outside school, with some also reporting the confident use of digital video and still cameras. As one young person wrote: 'Using digital cameras for our work is [a] way of showing development and work that we could reflect on.' It is interesting to note the comment of another young person in another school – 'if the teachers planned for it' and there was 'more availability'; they would be more able to use technology in school.
What became increasingly clear from this survey was the absence of any explicit connections between young people’s new media usage outside school and their aspirations with subject lessons. When asked, young people requested more computer-based opportunities in art lessons and named Photoshop, digital animation and the use of digital cameras as the new media that they would like to use more in school.

A link between what new media pupils requested and what their teachers said they were currently using, or working towards, implies a connection between what pupils understand to be possible and what they desire in the school context. Trainee teachers, on the other hand, saw much greater potential in exploiting in formal art education the new media used informally by young people. There was, however, a unanimous feeling that schools currently present many barriers to making this a reality.

Perhaps being given the opportunity and the challenge to work as users and creators – applying familiar technology to create something new for their own purpose – was the big issue for the young people involved in terms of their new media capabilities. Young people reported that broadening their ‘awareness of new media artists’ and learning to ‘use [new technology] in more inventive and abstract ways’ developed their confidence in their use of new media. Several of the young people also reported that the use and development of their communication and teamwork skills were at least as important, and perhaps even more so, to the success of the project as a whole.

**Listening to young people’s voices**

Far from the inarticulate and socially inept young people Popcorn and Hanman (2005) have prepared us to expect, the participants in this project were highly articulate and mature communicators. Many of them consistently demonstrated thoughtful and reflective perceptions about the project and their experiences of it during group discussions – at both workshop events and interim evaluations. Within small groups they were prepared to work with open-ended ideas and to debate points of view with skill and passion; while apparently more reticent within larger groups, in fact the older young people displayed a mature and measured approach in contributing to the wider discussion rather than a lack of confidence to engage.

In stage 1 it was noticeable that young people in the fourteen-sixteen age range generally found it more difficult to work in mixed age groups and often deferred to those aged between seventeen and twenty-two in discussion sessions when ideas were shared. They were also the most likely to drop out of the project and needed more active encouragement in order to sustain their involvement. Nevertheless, all the young people demonstrated particularly good listening skills, especially in listening to each other. This realisation is significant in its implications for the future.

In stage 2 the residential event was designed to develop the bond between members of the group and activities were designed both to build the confidence of individuals and establish working relationships. From the outset of this phase participants in the fourteen–sixteen age range demonstrated greater confidence and made a greater contribution to group discussions and the project design. The residential experience resulted in a more inclusive group dynamic that was generally sustained throughout the project. Different levels of confidence and contribution did emerge, however, when the young people were working with the artist to construct the body suits and create the sound bites and images needed to complete the planned interface. In his evaluation the artist reflected on this:

> There are one or two members of the group who seem very unconfident and as a result demand a lot of attention. This affects the whole group as we all have to spend time reassuring someone who still won’t get involved.

The frustration evident in this statement is explicit but the artist had only joined the project in its final stage; more than anything else it reflects his limited engagement with the young people. The individuals seen to be holding back the group at this stage, had, in fact, displayed strengths at an earlier phase when developing ideas providing social cohesion was more important. Inevitably this was outside the artist’s experience. Looking at the project as a whole, what was apparent to the project team was that all the young people made valuable contributions at different times. Even the young people for whom the social element of the project was its most important aspect, for example, made a real contribution to the positive group dynamic – and that is not to say that they didn’t relish the opportunities to be fully involved in the project as a whole.
Interestingly, when in stage 2, roles were delegated – a new experience for the group – the older members were voted in for the roles with greater responsibilities outside the sessions (group leader and finance officer). Younger members of the group tended to take responsibility for those elements most likely to be resolved during sessions (project design and publicity), where the wider group was more likely to make an active contribution. Whether because of an astute awareness among the group of their individual strengths or by chance, the allocation of roles was successful. Had the young people made less successful choices the project team would have had to decide whether to allow opportunities for failure (a necessary condition for creativity) to develop or whether to intervene. Fortunately, this was not an issue in this case.

**Young people’s voice: stage 1**
The ability of the young people to negotiate, debate and challenge each other in a mature and productive manner was most apparent during stage 1. They responded positively to adult-led tasks, i.e. during some of the early activities at ICDC, with the confidence to challenge or reject proposals as a vehicle for voicing their own ideas. Their ability to reflect during events was significant, and understanding these qualities in the young people informed plans for stage 2.

Participation in hands-on activities opened up spaces where young people were comfortable to voice their preferences, attitudes and interests. Giving them opportunities to share their opinions and ideas in isolated discussion groups was much less successful. As one young person commented, ‘You don’t want to spend time on something if it doesn’t happen.’ Being active was crucial for young people’s participation on all levels. There was obvious enthusiasm and commitment among the group about taking part, even when it wasn’t clear what they were taking part in, whereas sitting around the table to talk was not particularly productive.

When interviewed about her new media capabilities at the beginning of the project, one young person expressed feelings of anger and frustration about adult (family) assumptions that she ‘could do anything on a computer’. Apparently, not only did they often call upon her to undertake stressful and unrewarding tasks, she observed that they had no concept of the time and effort involved in creating a web-site for a family member.

**Young people’s voice: stage 2**
Stage 2 began with focused, active sessions which gave the young people a wide range of experiences in a short space of time. The three-day residential event provided an extended and saturated opportunity for the group to bond, and to discuss ideas together. The project brief was carefully designed with realistic targets and deadlines in order to provide the young people with a supportive framework for their decision-making and action-planning. This also enabled the project team to anticipate some of the skills and expert guidance that the group might need – so that these could be procured and made available when/if requested.

The role of the project team and visiting artists altered as the project progressed; it became less directive and increasingly one of facilitation. Once the young people’s ideas began to take shape with the potential to generate a successful proposal, it became progressively more possible for the young people to establish their own momentum – supporting themselves by displaying a readiness to consult members of the project team when they required help or advice. This included introducing young people to gallery publicity officers and curators; developing their interview skills; and engaging with new media technologies. Once the young people had established ownership of the subject and content of the project, their commitment and level of attendance increased, with most members attending sessions in the final stage.

**Empowerment and shifting identities**
Giving young people a voice has not required others to be silent. It has, however, demanded a shift in the relationships between gallery educators, new media artists, arts organisation and young people in response to this altered dynamic. Giving creative ownership to the young people in the project meant that the project team had to relinquish control, and uncertainty is perhaps the most difficult component to manage and embrace within action research.

A key strength of this project, however, has been the ability of all the participants to embrace change and to take risks. The young people’s reward has been to see an ambitious and successful project through from conception to realisation; the project team has been able not only to develop a deeper understanding of the participating institutions but also to establish a strong working collaboration.
Through the project young people have been able to demonstrate and develop their social skills and their ability to work outside their comfort zone in new and challenging contexts. They have had to be creative and resourceful: responding to set tasks and applying new technologies – and collaborating with unfamiliar people. Stage 1 of Virtual Lives offered important insights and new perceptions; it also prepared the young people for the next stage, that of working together as part of an effective team. During the preparation for stage 2 the project team anticipated that they might encounter difficulties with the young people’s commitment to a project over a prolonged period of time whilst taking on increasing responsibilities. Conversely, it has been noticeable that as the young people became more responsible for the success of the project, the more they articulated their need to sustain their commitment.

Previous interpretations of the project team’s role as facilitator have been examined and a more hands-on participation embraced as a result. Certainly, established skills within the project team have been valuable in helping young people to: use new media technology creatively; write their project brief; manage their budget; advertise for an artist to work with them; develop interview questions and appoint an artist; and negotiate appropriate venues for the ‘Body Language’ work on its completion etc. Yet there was also a sense that the project team were learning from each other and from the young people in an organic and sympathetic manner.

Contemplating more active participation in a facilitating role was an illuminating experience for the project team; it led to an understanding that their usual role often failed to support the maintenance of their new media skills and left them on the fringes of a project. Working alongside each other throughout the project to support the young people has enhanced the working relationships of the project team, with some skills and knowledge being shared, but establishing a programme for professional development across the members of the group has allowed the team to attend workshops together to develop their new media skills and knowledge, and to share further skills. Additionally, attending external workshops and conference events has further developed a sense of the ‘team’, opening up opportunities to extend the collaboration beyond this project.

For many of the team this was a key benefit: some noted that the most important aspects of the project were about ‘collaborating within a group’ and ‘working with other organisations’. However, there were also those who found this aspect less satisfactory, in that it extended them less:

I feel that in many ways the young people have had a more challenging learning experience than the organisations, as they have been the real focus of this project. Gallery educator

This view was echoed by the young people’s evaluations. When they were asked what they considered the most important aspects of the project, their comments talked about learning how to use new technology, ‘meeting people’, ‘seeing ideas come together’, and using this experience to enhance their career options:

Being able to lead, budget and organise a full art project [has helped] my application to UCAS. Young person

The collective observations of the trainee teachers, however, made it very clear that provision in schools for new media arts education is severely lacking. They noted that the opportunities provided by, and the success of, the young people’s ‘Body Language’ work would have been unlikely within a school or college environment, and that the collaborative element of this project provided the necessary challenge and resources to make it a success.
New media artists

In stage 1 it was the new media artists who were perhaps the least challenged by their role in the project – running workshops with the young people and trainee teachers. Working firmly within the artist-led production model, the artists and participants performed, and responded to, established practices in familiar patterns. The young people and trainee teachers were at their most comfortable here, fulfilling the tasks they were given and largely enjoying new experiences. Yet it was also here that the weaknesses of this model became apparent. Firstly, it relies on the artist to determine the content, structure and media for the session without any prior contact, or negotiation, with the participants. And then, workshop leader and participants adopt the well-rehearsed teacher-taught dynamic, both displaying an intrinsic knowledge of their roles within this relationship – a highly successful model within the parameters of the single workshop, but one which mitigates against organic and longer-term developments, and reinforces a more passive engagement from participants.

In stage 2 the young people’s engagement with the artist was very different – not least because of their active involvement in his recruitment. They conducted a formal application and interview process before selecting and appointing Dan Fox – as the applicant they believed would be the most suitable to help them to realise their project. Because they had responsibility for their budget the young people were very clear about getting value for money, and they were rigorous in the interviews in determining how much time the artists would spend on their work and how prepared they were to work with the group and listen to their ideas. Having established their collective role as employers, the young people very quickly established a comfortable working relationship with Dan.

The artist was chosen by the young people not only for his ability to communicate effectively with them but also for his skills and experience in creating interactive body suits. While the young people reported an unanimous and uncompromised sense of success and achievement, and despite an excellent working relationship with the young people, the artist himself did raise
some concerns. He found problematic the occasional absence of some of the young people from individual sessions, because assimilating these individuals back into the group on their return was a distraction that potentially challenged the progress of artwork belonging to everyone. Also, in his view, it effectively disenfranchised individuals from some aspects of the decision-making process. Understandably, the artist’s priority was the making of the final piece and as he states:

I have been working with trigger suits since 1996. This project offered me the opportunity to use my experience in a creative way. Technology has moved on at such a rate and the price dropped so much that things are possible now that weren’t even one year ago. I feel that I have been able to deliver a professional quality product to a budget in a relatively short space of time. The process for me has been a good mix of sharing my knowledge and responding to the needs of the group. Dan Fox

The nature of the artist–young people relationship differed significantly in stages 1 and 2 of the project. In stage 1 the artist took on more of a teaching role, determining what the young people might do and how they might go about it, the young people behaving in a more passive manner. In stage 2 the young people actively selected the artist with whom they wished to work and they were much more confident about asking questions and putting forward their own ideas. While the young people valued their contact with practising artists in both stages of the project, the artist in stage 2 bridged differences in age and experience, and thereby established a meaningful working relationship that extended the young people’s experience and upped the quality of the artwork they produced.

**Trainee teachers**

Initially the trainee teachers expressed high levels of anxiety regarding the organic nature of the project. New to their trainee teacher status and acutely conscious of the intensive demands of their training course, this group found it difficult to reconcile their project responsibilities with other aspects of their studies. Later reflections, however, illustrate a significant shift. By this stage the trainee teachers were firm advocates for developing the curriculum in schools, and working with the new media industries, in order to prepare young people (equipping them with appropriate experience) for the contemporary workplace.

Given the opportunity to search the virtual spaces that young people inhabit – such as youtube, flickr, myspace, bebo and wikis – the trainee teachers reported that they felt like voyeurs. They were troubled by the amount of sexually explicit, misleading and aggressive material they found on these sites; they rejected them outright as an educational resource. Their intentions to use less contentious forms of new media – such as mobile phones and bipods – in their teaching were thwarted, however, because these technologies were consistently outlawed by schools among their pupils.

Obviously, if mobile phones are banned in school, trainee teachers cannot be seen to promote their use in the classroom, even if, as one trainee observed:
Interestingly, many of the students I teach arrive at lessons without their books or even any writing implements, but they all have their phones. Trainee teacher

As they began their first teaching placements, the trainees in both stages of the project were shocked at the lack of facilities, training and technical support in schools for new media arts. They also commented on an overriding lack of confidence among established art teachers:

> When considering my own experience within a school environment there are already existing problems within its art department and new media facilities, mainly due to its lack of funding within the area. There is also the obvious need for training staff, many of which have no real understanding of the use of computers for the simplest needs, such as the internet, before even considering computers for the use of design packages. Trainee teacher

During their teaching practice trainees managed to negotiate access to computer rooms only to find that the software was obsolete and whole schemes of work biased towards the traditional fine arts. It was at this point that the trainees began to understand the extent of the challenges facing them as teachers of the future.

At this point the trainee teachers expressed a new awareness of the importance of new media arts organisations, as a means of support for themselves and young people, in the development of a contemporary curriculum. Having gained an insight into what could be achieved by working with new media arts organisations, trainee teachers were excited about the potential of collaboration:

> Being part of a big organisation like FACT is brilliant. I personally think that schools should interact with communities and organisations. It is a way that teachers and pupils today can develop further information and knowledge with digital technologies and contemporary practice. Trainee teacher

Many of the trainees made a strong case for collaborative teaching as a way to develop new media arts education for young people, inside and outside school. They were concerned that young people’s experiences should prepare them for the workplace and for further education; working with arts organisations would validate their new media arts status long-term. While the Virtual Lives project did not invite collaboration with or through a school, there is tremendous potential to develop this model to create better opportunities for young people to engage with new media technologies in worthwhile and creative ways. Collaboration would also enable issues of funding, skills and resources to be addressed by all parties, allowing a sharing of the load, financial or logistical.

**Collaboration across new media arts education organisations**

This has been an ambitious and courageous project; it set out to go beyond the advocacy of established success. Working alongside each other, and sharing insights – both face to face and through Base Camp – developed a relationship between the project team, their organisations and the young people. The end-of-project evaluation and the enquire conference at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts – an opportunity to share experiences and findings with other clusters – acted as an important catalyst in crystallising key themes within the research.

Shared events have developed strong bonds across the project team. The planned training programme will build upon these by further eroding institutional boundaries and forming even closer working relationships. Members of the project team have developed a shared bank of experiential knowledge that could continue to underpin future developments. The collaborative experience has created a bedrock for further research into young people’s new media arts programming.
The legacy of the culture of education
We are all a product of our socialisation so that operating outside established behaviour patterns is difficult and uncomfortable. Operating within institutional frameworks, pre-determined power structures, learned behaviour patterns and established roles inevitably impacted upon all aspects of this project, because in order to draw young people into the decision-making arena of new media arts education these established roles have to shift. The challenge that this represents is not to be underestimated. Investigating opportunities for change has required all of the participants to respond in unfamiliar ways in familiar circumstances. Flexibility of approach and an ability to work outside traditional roles has been a necessary requirement in the project so far and will continue to be a necessary condition in developing this work further.

While schools continue to outlaw mobile phones, MP3 players, ipods etc, the preferred digital technologies of young people, they are signalling that young people’s tacit knowledge has no value in the educational context. Galleries and arts organisations, meanwhile provide educational models that are less inhibited by the orthodoxy of school culture that limits curriculum development in schools. Indeed, the new media arts educators have demonstrated an ability actually to action innovative practice. Thus this research project has relevance far beyond its immediate members.

The ambiguous identities of trainee teachers, in relation to their artist status, remain problematic. The impressive collective experience and expertise that this group represents has been largely unexploited within this research. In naming them ‘trainee teachers’ the project team has found it difficult to acknowledge these capabilities, but recognises that there is potential for a greater use of this significant resource in the future.

Emergent issues and dilemmas
Informal discussions and the end-of-project evaluation revealed that the young people look to FACT, Cornerhouse and folly to provide opportunities to learn new skills and access new technologies. The relationship that pre-existed between the young people and the participating institutions was found to be both essential and problematic in meeting the aims of this research project. The strong working relationship between the young people and their associate organisation was significant in determining their commitment to the project and their ability to sustain their attendance over the project’s seven-month duration. However, the stronger the working relationship, the more content the young people appeared to be with existing programmes and therefore the less concerned they appeared to be with challenging current practice.

Interestingly, the fourteen to twenty-five age range that defined the project’s young people also included several of its trainee teachers and they found the distinction between themselves and the young people they were interviewing false and uncomfortable. Despite degree-level accreditation in an area of new media arts and a confidence in their field, the trainee teachers aged twenty-five or younger did not feel that they could consider themselves ‘digital natives’. One trainee in his early thirties felt his experience was more consistent with Prenski’s ‘digital native’ definition than his younger peers’, while another, in her twenties, beyond her digital animation skills shared the young people’s lack of confidence.

Manovich’s interpretation of new media technologies as being in a state of constant evolution fits the experience of this project more comfortably. The trainee teachers made a case that distinctions between those that have grown up with new technologies and those that have adopted them in later life are all relative to a specific time frame: thus, today’s digital native will inevitably become tomorrow’s digital immigrant.
Conclusions

Young people's skills in new media technologies tended to be focused rather than generic with very little evidence of commonality among the group. Young people's access to new media technologies varied greatly from those with laptops, mobile phones and unlimited Internet connections to those that relied largely on the arts organisations for their engagement. To make decisions based on broad assumptions about young people's new media capabilities is therefore flawed and problematic.

Giving young people their voice in developing new media arts education will require unconventional strategies for generating ideas and developing curricula. Orthodox methods, such as planning meetings, may be unproblematic within institutional practices, but among adult programme-planning teams they effectively alienate and silence young people. Therefore, if institutions such as FACT, Cornerhouse and folly wish to give young people a voice, it is not enough simply to invite them to the table. Creating an environment conducive to young people demands a radical rethinking of how collaborative programming teams should function.

Having created a fissure in the general pattern of adult-led programmes for young people in new media arts it is now important to break this wide open and build upon the significant work of this research project.

Young people bring mature and sophisticated skills to this endeavour in terms of their ability to negotiate, debate, reflect and respond to change. The challenge for future research in this area will be to enhance an organic engagement with young people, rather than undermining it, by creating a supportive structure and appropriate timeframe for the work.

Inter-institutional collaboration provides an impressive and flexible collective resource that can confidently facilitate future developments. The strong group identity developed by this project has increased the potential for drawing successfully upon these resources.

‘Body Language’, the artwork produced through this project, demonstrates an exceptional level of achievement for all the young people involved. Living in various parts of the North West, these young people have developed effective working relationships with each other – and with all the participating institutions – to develop a project brief and an interactive artwork (with two body suits and a sound/image interface), which represents their ability to sustain a commitment to a project in their own time for up to twenty months. The final work is of a very high standard and will tour several venues to share this noteworthy achievement with a wider audience in galleries, conference venues and educational establishments.

As the Virtual Lives project reaches a sense of closure, what is most important is that it reveals a way forward for the future. The project team and the young people involved have all expressed a commitment to moving on to a new level of challenge.

References


Report on research undertaken by The Manchester Museum, Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium and Artists and Education in collaboration with The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University, and partner artists and teachers.

Introduction and overview for two phases of research

The Manchester Museum joined enquire at the beginning of the second phase of research in 2006; it has undertaken two cycles of research since then. The rationale behind the project was to bridge the gap between the Museum’s education programme and its Alchemy project, through which artists research the museum for a sustained period to develop their practice.

Through supporting artists’ research, and the creation of new work, Alchemy aims to reinvigorate museum displays, encourage diverse approaches and present alternative voices; creating an exciting programme of contemporary art and revealing inspiring research. Alchemy website home page (1)

Alchemy—enquire was to parallel these aims for gallery learning with artists and contemporary art. The Manchester Museum had not previously had an arts education programme for students of secondary-school age.

In its first year of research the North West (Manchester) cluster comprised The Manchester Museum, Artists & Education (A&E) and Creative Partnerships Manchester Salford (CPMS) – see introduction to enquire report 2006–2007 for more information. The projects were carried out with two schools from Manchester and Salford and two artists, each working with one of the schools. Dr Erinma Ochu of The University of Manchester wrote the report for this research period.

The composition of the cluster for the second year was different: The Manchester Museum worked in partnership with the Harris Museum and Art Gallery in Preston, and Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium also became involved in the project work and cluster collaboration. Artists and Education and Creative Partnerships Salford Manchester continued to participate as part of the cluster’s wider network. There were three schools involved in phase 2.2, each working with one of the museums, and a total of nine artists. The research report for this period was written by Dr Liz Jones, Ms Christina Macrae and Dr Rachel Holmes of Manchester Metropolitan’s Education and Social Research Institute.

Erinma Ochu was selected to write the research report for phase 2.1 as a result of her earlier collaboration with The Manchester Museum and CPMS on an action research project for key stage 3 science education; Dr Rachael Holmes’s team was awarded the tender for phase 2.2 as a result of their submission in response to a call (detailing the research aims on the basis of the first year’s research) sent out to selected researchers at The University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Salford.

Schools were selected on the basis of their interest and willingness to work on a project such as this.

Artists were asked to submit proposals that detailed their interest in working in the fields of education and with museum collections. It was decided, in order to emphasise to schools the relevance of the collection, that each phase of the research would work with different, non-art classes. In phase 1 the focus was on citizenship education, while in the second year it was history.

The first year of research established the idea of working with artists on learning projects within a museum setting and with museum collections. The museum already had programmes for secondary-school science and humanities but not for arts. The enquire research enabled The Manchester Museum to explore uncharted territory: working for learning with contemporary art and artists within a professional framework of learning, reflection and evaluation. This was supported, and reinforced, by the museum’s partnership with two established arts/education organisations: A&E and CPMS.

The second year of research allowed The Manchester Museum to share and develop this experience with peers by forming a cluster with two other museums. The collaborative partnership framework established in year one—museum, school and artist—formed the focus for the research in year two. In year one the focus of the research had been on the active learning process for all partners and participants in general, measured against specific key stage 3 citizenship curriculum objectives. In phase 2.2, working across three similar collections-based institutions, and with artists and schools within a shared framework, the research could examine the variety and diversity of potential experiential outcomes that might emerge in relatively similar projects.
Although the research aims, research questions, theoretical frameworks and methodologies have been devised individually for each phase of the research, an overall framework was maintained throughout: the emphasis was on collaboration and reflection within a tripartite framework of museum, school and artist. The underlying objective was to evidence how museums, schools and artists could best work together with contemporary art to create benefits for learning with contemporary art. In phase 2.1 the focus was on how a community of learners could be demonstrated, and in phase 2.2 on the broader conditions for collaboration, through which to create the best space for learning.

Phase 2.1, 2006–7
The role of art in a non-arts museum in supporting key stage 3 citizenship education

Introduction
Alchemy—enquire is an action research programme for young people, artists, teachers, museum educators and curators; it evolved through partnership working, professional development and reflective practice. The programme provides a unique opportunity to widen the impact and reach of museum arts education by combining and exchanging the knowledge, expertise and skills of extensive networks. The programme is jointly funded by enquire and the Museums Libraries and Archives North West Museums’ Hub.

The partners in the North West (Manchester) cluster

The Manchester Museum
The Manchester Museum is a large multidisciplinary museum and part of the University of Manchester with strong links to the university’s faculty of Art, History and Cultures, Life Sciences and the School of Education. Around 4.5 million objects and specimens are housed in the museum, contributing to research in anthropology, Egyptology, archaeology, archery, geology and the life sciences.

The museum education programme encompasses primary, secondary and higher education. Young people are an integral part of the museum: set alongside other collections in the North West, or in the country as a whole, it attracts a higher proportion of young people among its visitors than is the average. Young people’s views inform the education programmes and exhibitions and the development of permanent galleries.

The Manchester Museum also has a growing reputation as a site for artistic creativity: through the Alchemy project (www.alchemy. manchester.museum), artists have made interventions in the permanent galleries and created exhibitions inspired by the museum’s collections. In its second year, the Alchemy project built on its previous work to bring together museum collections, artists and university researchers to create new interpretations and to invigorate practice. Alchemy—enquire is also inspired by museum collections but its impact and focus extends to secondary education and the teaching of key stage 3 (KS3) citizenship.

Artists and Education
Artists and Education (A&E) provides project management, continued professional development (CPD), events management, research and consultancy for artists and educators. A&E works in partnership with ‘residency hosts’ – schools and community centres, for example – to design and deliver artists’ residencies or projects. This includes identifying artists, providing support and guidance for both artists and hosts, and evaluating finished projects. A&E also undertakes consultancy and research briefs focused on the impact on young people of quality arts provision, and annually acts as an Artsmark validator for Arts Council England. A&E is based at the University of Salford and works closely with the School of Art and Design, to develop programmes of study for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Creative Partnerships Manchester Salford (CPMS)
Creative Partnerships is a ‘change programme’ designed to build sustainable relationships between schools, creative individuals and organisations in order to: change the approach and attitudes of teachers; change the practice of creative individuals and organisations; and change the aspirations and performance of young people. It encourages a focus on the development of creativity in young people and of creative approaches to teaching in all areas of the curriculum.

Key to Creative Partnerships’ objectives of supporting schools, teachers and creative practitioners and organisations to improve their cultural and educational provision and to enhance the skills they need to work together effectively is partnership working. CPMS view partnership working as a process, one which helps both to develop the capacity for effective creative learning
practice, and to sustain it. CPMS aim: to continue to support, and be involved in, programmes that focus on the professional development of teachers and creative practitioners; to deliver high-quality creative programmes linked to enriching the national curriculum and engaging young people; and to measure the impact of those programmes through research and reflection (Arts Council 2007). CPMS currently support fourteen schools in Manchester and Salford.

School partners
Of the schools which expressed a strong interest in the project, two secondary CPMS-supported schools were selected to participate. School 1 from Manchester is a mixed, non-denominational, community comprehensive school with 1,500 pupils aged between eleven and sixteen. It has Specialist Arts Status and has been involved in the CPMS programme since 2005. School 2 from Salford is a voluntary-aided Roman Catholic comprehensive school with Specialist Technology Status. Also mixed and also with pupils aged between eleven and sixteen, it has only 700 pupils. School 2 has been involved in the CPMS programme since its inception in 2002. Having participated in past CPMS action research programmes, both schools already have an awareness of action research. Moreover the lead teacher from School 2 attended ‘Inquiring Minds’, a creative science action research dissemination workshop run by the researcher in November 2006.

The North West Museums’ Hub
The North West Museums’ Hub is a partnership between:

- The Manchester City Galleries
- Bolton Museum, Art Gallery & Aquarium
- Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston
- Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, Carlisle
- The Manchester Museum
- Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

The Hub’s education programme aims to fulfil the potential of the region’s museums and galleries. It is characterised by a strong emphasis on collaboration and a willingness to explore new approaches to development and the dissemination of good practice. The Hub’s focus on increasing access to collections, education and learning, includes: delivering citizenship projects for the thirteen to sixteen age range in schools across the region; strengthening the working of partner museums; developing the workforce; and understanding museum audiences. The Hub runs an ongoing programme of ‘best practice’ events which explore the conclusions to be drawn from key regional and Hub-funded initiatives.

Research rationale

What is citizenship education?
There is ongoing debate around the ‘definition, purposes and intended outcomes’ of citizenship and citizenship education (Pearce & Hallgarten 2000). As a result citizenship is taught in different ways – as a separate subject or through existing subjects, notably, history, science and geography. High-profile political events, such as 9/11 and the Iraq war, have contributed to the validation of a multidimensional approach to citizenship education; it is seen to prepare young people more appropriately for democracy, not only as citizens of a nation but as global citizens able to respond to global events. The possibility of a hidden political agenda for citizenship education has not gone unnoticed but is beyond the scope of this report (Kerr & Cleaver 2004).

Citizenship is compulsory in England at key stage 3 and key stage 4 of the national curriculum (see www.nc.uk.net). It covers:

- knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens
- developing skills of enquiry and communication
- developing skills of participation and responsible action

Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens:
KS3 pupils should be taught about:

a) the legal and human rights and responsibilities underpinning society, basic aspects of the criminal justice system, and how both relate to young people

b) the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding
c) the work of community-based, national and international voluntary groups

d) the significance of the media in society

**Developing skills of enquiry and communication:**
At key stage 3 pupils should be taught:

a) to think about topical political, spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, problems and events, by analysing information and its sources, including ICT-based sources

b) to justify orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events

c) to contribute to group and exploratory class discussions, and take part in debates

**Developing skills of participation and responsible action:**
At key stage 3 pupils should be taught:

a) to use their imagination to consider other people's experiences and be able to think about, express and explain views that are not their own

b) to negotiate, make decisions and participate responsibly in both school and community-based activities

c) to reflect on the process of participating

In conclusion, the study recommended that:

- 64% of teachers did not know whether citizenship improved pupils’ levels of overall achievement

**Museum-based learning**
The theory behind museum-based learning has been defined as ‘discovery learning’, in which learning is an active process, often involving interaction with, and a hands-on/sensory experience of, the collections as well as some means to allow the visitor to assess their own interpretation of exhibits (Hein 1995). The *Inspiring Learning for All* framework (ILFA) for evidencing learning in museums, libraries and archives is based on the belief that every experience in a museum has the potential to encourage learning [www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk]. At The Manchester Museum learning and discovery are at the core of the visitor experience and form the basis of the arts education programme.

As the emphasis has been placed on museums to act as places to inspire learning by accessing and engaging with cultural heritage, extensive education programmes have evolved to support curriculum education. *Our City*, a project produced by the North West Museums Hub, used the ILFA and Generic Learning Outcomes (GLO) frameworks to evidence the role of museum and gallery education programmes in supporting the KS3 citizenship curriculum.

**The role of creativity through the arts**
Engaging children in creative processes (those associated with an art form) carries with it an assumption that it enables children to develop their capacity to be creative. All our futures, the pivotal report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) reopened the debate on the need for creativity to transform teaching and learning across the curriculum to produce young people equipped with the necessary skills to navigate a jobs market that is increasingly knowledge-based (1999).
The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has gone so far as to identify five broad behaviours that children demonstrate when they are being creative [see www.qca.org.uk]:

- Questioning and challenging
- Making connections and seeing relationships
- Envisaging what might be
- Exploring ideas, keeping options open
- Reflecting critically on ideas, actions and outcomes

There are clear parallels between young people displaying the above behaviours and those able to demonstrate the core citizenship skills of enquiry and communication and participation and responsible action. The aim here, then, is to use engagement in a creative process – both the arts activity itself and the transfer of the associated skills – to find ways of addressing areas of the citizenship curriculum that are relevant and engaging to the pupils.

There are already a number of programmes that have involved the creativity of artists and their artistic skills to equip young people with the skills of active citizenship, including a number of Creative Partnership programmes across England [www.creative-partnerships.com] and the Arts Council England's Arts Award [www.artsaward.org.uk].

The Alchemy-enquire approach

The Alchemy-enquire programme creates partnerships between artists, teachers, pupils and museum professionals to form a community of learners in which learning is a social activity, and the motivation to learn is intrinsic to the learner: by enabling learners, for example, through a range of creative interventions and experiences, to connect with museum collections and objects as the starting point to explore citizenship education.

Through interdisciplinary professional development seminars and networking sessions Alchemy-enquire attempts to bridge the gap, and create exchange, between the Museum's education programme and the arts-based Alchemy programme.

In order to facilitate the move from 'discovery learning', which encompasses all learning styles but which is, to a large extent, led by museum professionals, to a situation in which a 'community of learners' draws on, and shares, a pool of diverse knowledge, skills and experience, the professional development needs of museum educators will need to be addressed.

Alchemy-enquire has evolved from an existing action research programme and partnership between the Manchester Museum and CPMS, which used practitioner (artist and scientist) intervention to explore creative approaches to the teaching of KS3 science, albeit over a longer period of time. Alchemy-enquire aims specifically to explore the role of art and reflective practice to stimulate and support KS3 citizenship education in schools. It aims to transfer skills, knowledge and experiences gained from the museum setting into the classroom and vice versa.

This approach is not unique. There are already a number of programmes delivered through engage that support a partnership and skills-exchange approach in gallery education (wwwengage.org), and similar programmes delivered through the CPMS action research programme (www.creative-partnerships.com) and CAPE UK (www.capeuk.org) in schools. However, Alchemy-enquire offers the museum's collections as unique starting points for artists to generate creative interventions that will impact on the teaching and learning of citizenship.

Objectives and Aims

The partners explored objectives and aims from the perspectives of pupils, teachers, artists and the partner organisations involved in the project. To facilitate joint ownership and to discover the intrinsic motivation for each partner's participation in the programme, each partner was asked to specify their objectives for the programme. The common objectives drawn from this exercise were:

- to develop evidence-based reflective practice through action research
- to develop CPD opportunities for partners, artists and teachers
- to disseminate to wider networks

Whether the aims, supported by objectives mapped out from the citizenship curriculum, were achieved was to be evidenced through the reflected (and documented) practice of all beneficiaries in the intervening creative activities of the young people.
Aims

- To motivate and encourage young people to become ‘active citizens’
- To encourage and enhance the exchange of skills, creativity and cultural knowledge between schools, cultural and creative professionals: ‘co-participative exchange’
- To provide professional development across the partnership within a formalised framework and network: ‘sustainability and legacy’

Research Methodology

A number of learning frameworks exist that seek to define the impact of creative education interventions for learning outcomes, and specifically for learning and teaching within the contexts of galleries and museums (Pringle 2006).

From the outset, however, a grounded-theory approach was adopted, rather than one of these learning frameworks, to explore the role of museum-based arts education in supporting the KS3 citizenship curriculum. Two case studies, in which artists worked in partnership with a school and the museum to support KS3 citizenship education, were explored in depth, alongside existing research methods. There was reference to our project aims and objectives and all participants were consulted, in order to take into account the suitability of the methods to capture their different perspectives. This approach allowed a theory or framework to emerge to ‘fit’ the data (Charmaz 2006).

Data collection

In addition to traditional research methods (questionnaires, written diaries and video diaries), and building on the work of the Alchemy programme, the programme was in part evidenced through the collation and analysis of the creative responses of pupils and artists. Indeed, this was specified in the artists’ brief. This included photographs, written work, drawings, audio and video recordings created by the pupils and the artists. The evidence would therefore be located to some extent in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Objectives (mapped from curriculum objectives)</th>
<th>Process-driven learning outcomes (evidenced through practice)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Active Citizens</td>
<td>through the development of skills of:</td>
<td>Young people can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• enquiry and communication</td>
<td>• empathise with the views and experiences of others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• participation and responsible action</td>
<td>• contribute to group discussions and debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Co-participative exchange</td>
<td>exchange of skills, experience, practice/expertise and knowledge between co-participants: pupils, teachers</td>
<td>Acquisition of new skills that:</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>and creative practitioners</td>
<td>• enhance creativity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>through the formalisation of a network that connects schools, museums and galleries</td>
<td>• encourage reflective practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Sustainability and legacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>• encourage lifelong learning</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• build awareness of development needs of pupils and the</td>
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<td>working practices of schools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Activity and practice informs the framework</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>e.g. sharing ‘best practice’</td>
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creative responses of the pupils and elucidated through critical reflection of that work. Additionally, sharing events, using a range of responsive techniques (mapping, discourse, notes/postcards to self), captured the response of the interdisciplinary network: the partners and funding bodies.

The rationale, in addition to establishing a baseline for teachers and pupils via open questionnaires about their current understanding and approaches to citizenship education, was to capture both the internal (through diaries and notes/postcards to self) and shared thoughts (mapping and discourse). It was hoped that using these approaches would make it possible to collect reflective responses as well as immediate responses from participants – and personal/private as well as group/public responses.

As part of their brief, the artists consulted pupils on the creative methods to evidence their learning and this was incorporated into each project.

**Qualitative methods**
- questionnaires – to establish pupil and teacher baseline on understanding and approach to citizenship education
- written reflective diaries – to capture the experience of participants after each stage
- session notes of observing researcher
- discourse around research themes and approaches at sharing events
- creative responses embedded within the project activity – for example, audio, video, notes to self, photographic evidence

See appendices 1 and 2 for questionnaires and reflective diary template.

**Research ethics**
The British Educational Research Association’s (BERA) ethical guidelines (2004) were followed. Voluntary, informed consent was sought from schools to use evidence collected as data.

**Project details: Alchemy–enquire**
The project’s intervention activity comprised a programme of museum- and school-based arts education sessions – developed and delivered by the artist in partnership with the teacher. The Egyptology collection, and specifically ‘how the dead live’, one of the museum’s collection-based art exhibitions around ancient and contemporary funerary practices, was to be the inspiration for the project’s intervention activity, although one artist chose the museum’s mammals collection.

**The Programme**

**STAGE 1: September 2006 Team planning**
- Partners explored objectives and planned artist CPD
- An online project management site was established to share articles and documents relating to the project
- Artists, North West gallery and museum educators and university professionals who work with, or who are interested in working with, artists gathered informally to explore interdisciplinary research themes and approaches
- Artists and CPMS schools were invited to participate in the programme

**STAGE 2: November 2006 Artists’ museum visit**
The partner network invited artists to come and find out about the Alchemy–enquire research project with a view to thinking about how their work might present connections with the museum collections and offer opportunities for work with young people and teachers to support the citizenship curriculum.

A museum curator introduced the artists to the museum’s Egyptology collections both displayed and stored. A museum educator presented an overview on citizenship education and gave an insight into how the museum had been engaged in supporting citizenship education to date. A&É devised and delivered a professional development session around artists working in educational settings.

At the end of the day the artists were invited to spend one hour collecting information (drawing, photographing, recording, exploring spaces, writing etc.) to inform a one-page outline of how they might like to work with young people.
STAGE 3: December 2006 Artists’ initial response to brief
Artists submitted their one-page outline in response to the artists’ brief, which was essentially to:
• use museum, objects & collections as a catalyst
• incorporate the pupils’ voice
• embed reflective practice & creative documentation
• explore sustainability and legacy for teachers
• encourage active citizenship

STAGE 4: December 2006 Shortlisting of artists
The partners selected five artists to work on the project, inviting them to develop their ideas into a full proposal – with the support of A&E.

STAGE 5: January 2007 Development of artists’ proposals
The five selected artists developed a full proposal to address the requirements of the artists’ brief (see appendix 4 for artist’s brief).

They met representatives of A&E, who gave guidance on what makes a strong education proposal and more specifically on responding to the brief. There was also input from the action researcher on action research, reflective practice and creative documentation.

STAGE 6: Date 2007 Submission of artists’ proposals
The five artists presented their proposals to the two schools.

STAGE 7: Date 2007 Teachers’ selection of artists
The teachers from the two schools that had expressed an interest in being involved in the programme met the partners, were given the five artists’ proposals, and were asked to choose which artists they wanted to work with. Two artists were selected: School 1 chose Artist 1, a drama practitioner and theatre director, and School 2 chose Artist 2, a visual artist and university lecturer.

STAGE 8: Date 2007 Project planning
A&E facilitated the teacher–artist partnership during the project planning phase. There was additional input from the action researcher about recording their work and reflective practice, and also input from the museum curator and educators about the collections and the logistics of accessing them.

STAGE 9: Dates 2007 Research activity
Both schools adopted the same pattern for the activity phase of the project:
• an initial pupil consultation session with the artist in the school, in order to inform the design of the creative intervention
• a one-day session at the museum
• two further one-day sessions at the school (or another location)
• a joint celebration and sharing session for pupils, teachers, artists and network partners, hosted by The Manchester Museum, at which both schools exhibited their work

STAGE 10: Date of exhibition: the legacy of the project – dissemination, further opportunities
Discussion between artists, teachers, researcher and museum curators at a joint celebration event and exhibition of work produced during research activity enabled dissemination of the research to the wider partner network.

Participants

School 1 Manchester comprehensive with specialist Arts status.
  Mixed, non-denominational, 11–16 years, 1,500 students.
  Has purpose-built theatre space and audio suite.

The school has received numerous other awards during the past few years including Sportmark (3 times), Artsmark Silver and Gold, Investors in People (twice) and a Regional Training Award for Staff Development.

Students Thirteen Year 8 students with special educational needs (SEN)

Teacher 1 Citizenship coordinator (not class teacher), Head of Life Skills

Subjects Geography, Citizenship, PSHE, Careers, Work-related Learning, Enterprise

‘Our school chose to get involved with The Manchester Museum citizenship project as we
wanted to look at creative ways of teaching citizenship within the school.'

**Artist 1** Drama practitioner and theatre director

'I work as a freelance director and drama facilitator. The voice of young people is very important to me and to my work. In this project, I will act as a shaper and guider. I am very interested in what the young people think, say, create and imagine. It will be my job to stitch all this material together into a coherent and quality piece of oral theatre. The students should feel full ownership over the final outcome, and the words, characters and stories will be fully theirs. This way of working is called "devising" and is a way I have worked with young people on numerous projects in the past.'

**Project** Exploration of the idea of leaving a legacy: through the Egyptology collection, and with the use of "memory boxes", as used by people affected by HIV in Africa.

**Process** Initially pupils used disposable cameras to photograph objects of importance from their own lives. They spent one day at the museum in the Egyptology gallery, where they created Egyptian characters, and explored the objects which they might put in a tomb. Another day, in school, they focused on themselves and the objects they might put in their own memory box.

Drama exercises, written work and audio recordings were used to document the pupils' responses. The artist edited these responses into a podcast and there was also a slideshow of photographs documenting their experience. The pupils combined drawing, photography and collage to create personalised memory boxes, which were displayed at Manchester Museum during the joint sharing and celebration event.

**School 2:** Salford comprehensive with specialist Technology status, Mixed, Roman Catholic, 11–16 years, 700 students.

**Students** Seventeen Year 8 students (bottom set: low to mixed ability with low predicted grades)

The teacher said that many of the participating pupils were used to failing in Science tests and assignments. This had resulted in low self-esteem and a tendency to give up easily, the general attitude being 'What's the point, I won't be able to do it anyway.' They were difficult to motivate and engage in Science. It was hoped that Alchemy—enquire would engage the pupils in an aspect of science/citizenship, and that this would lead to increased self-esteem and improved learning.

**Teacher 2** Science teacher (class teacher, not citizenship coordinator)

**Artist 2** Visual artist and university lecturer

'Working with the Manchester Museum collections would help me to further develop my work, particularly in engaging with older children. As a process-driven practitioner, my work is responsive. Children would take an active role in leading the work produced.'

**Project** The exploration of issues of native and non-native species through: the museum's mammalian collection; an exploration of the school grounds and a trip to Clifton Marina country park; and a show-and-tell visit from local college students who were on an animal handling and management course.

**Process** Pupils spent three days looking at native and non-native species: the first at the museum looking specifically at mammalian species, the second at Clifton Marina park, and the third in school, when animal management students from Salford College (aged 16–19 years) brought in native and non-native animals and gave a presentation on their care/handling.

The pupils worked in groups to research and document the project by collecting samples, photography, audio and video recordings and then curating an exhibition of their research findings in the classroom and school foyer. The artist edited
together a short video to accompany the exhibition. Four pupils curated the final exhibition at the Museum as part of the joint sharing and celebration event.

Research findings

Active citizens
Attitudes towards citizenship education

It was the perception of both teachers that:

- all other subjects were rated as more important than citizenship
- the main issue facing citizenship education was a lack of time, skills and/or resources

In reality, in school 1 PHSE, Work-related learning, Careers and English as a second language were not rated as more important than citizenship, but in school 2 the teacher’s perception was accurate. In both schools. The main issue facing secondary teachers was perceived as a lack of allocated curriculum time to teach the subject; citizenship was taught through other subjects (science, for example) but not through suspended timetable activities/events or partnership activities. School 1 articulated the challenge of citizenship education as a question: ‘How can citizenship education be improved so that teachers and pupils are best supported to develop the skills that will help them become active and informed citizens?’

At the outset, 8 out of 16 pupils questioned perceived that citizenship was relevant to them. However, pupils demonstrated a poor understanding of citizenship education. Only one pupil was involved at the beginning of the project in any sort of voluntary activity or community group. This remained the situation throughout the project. Indeed, some pupils were even confused as to what voluntary activity entailed. However, the teacher in School 2 expected that, funding permitting, the external partnerships developed with the museum and a local college would present further opportunities for pupils to become active citizens.

Baseline measures of the teachers’ current assessment of how well the pupils were progressing in citizenship at KS3 was not reflected by pupil’s understanding of what citizenship education entailed. Pupils’ comments included:

‘It makes no difference.’
‘Not [relevant] in school though.’
‘When you learn more, you get more interested in it.’
‘Don’t know much about it.’
‘But I don’t quite understand about stuff like that.’

One pupil acknowledged:

‘We do an extra lesson in school. Young children need to know about it and how it works. It’s like helping out the environment, like all the trees that have been knocked down.’

By the end of the project, when asked the same questions, 10 out of 16 pupils asserted that citizenship was relevant, with some pupils able to expand on what citizenship might entail, although this may not necessarily be as a result of the intervention. Pupils’ comments at this stage included:

‘[Citizenship] is quite relevant – we need to stop racism and bullying.’
‘It’s like helping people and animals and helping people get along with one another.’
‘It’s relevant – about helping other people and like carrying shopping and clearing up. Very relevant.’
‘It’s alright. Some stuff I don’t know about, some I do. Its in the middle – its personal, social education where you learn about life.’
‘I think it is relevant but people don’t always take it seriously.’

One pupil, who initially found citizenship relevant, now asserted that:

‘It’s not that relevant, ‘cos I am not that interested in it that much.’

Whereas, at the beginning of the project, the majority of pupils were unable to state what they thought the project was about or what issues it might uncover (despite having had a session with the artist where they had been introduced to the project), and did not make the connection between the project and citizenship education, at the end of the project, all pupils were able to identify at least one issue that the project had uncovered and the majority said that they were interested in what they were finding out.
In addition, pupils noted that other people ‘should have more interest’ in what they were learning but that they might not believe it until they ‘went around and looked at stuff themselves.’

Three pupils didn’t think the government cared about what they were finding out whilst two others thought the government would think it was ‘good for pupils’ because ‘they were learning about this stuff.’

Artists and teachers chose not to make explicit the fact that the project would cover aspects of the citizenship curriculum.

‘I found it quite difficult – didn’t have grasp of the project – [I] never mentioned the words citizenship – [I] don’t think they [pupils] have a grasp of it.’ Artist 1

‘I was vary wary of the citizenship – I was lucky that a science teacher chose my proposal.’ Artist 2

‘I have a slight worry in that I slightly hijacked the project to favour the teaching of science and not citizenship; for example, pupils now know how humans impact upon the environment and how the introduction of non-native species can change a habitat. The things they have learnt about citizenship are less explicit.’ Teacher 2

Although it was not always explicitly linked to citizenship, teachers noted that learning had occurred:

‘... the students themselves were extremely positive about the learning experience and understood the importance of memories and how they linked to history itself.’ Teacher 1

‘The pupils have a far greater understanding of how their actions and the actions of other humans impact upon the environment. Also, they have a greater appreciation of the variety of wildlife and plant life that is within Salford and accessible to them.’ Teacher 2

The role of media
Initially the majority of pupils (9 out of 16) displayed very little awareness of the role of media in their lives. Some simply listed the different types of media they liked, such as TV, radio and magazines; some thought the role of the media was to ‘entertain’, ‘give information’ and ‘educate’; comments from the others ranged from ‘don’t know’, to ‘doesn’t affect me’, to ‘don’t care [about media]’ and ‘[it’s] cool.’

As the project progressed, pupils did not appear to make the connection between their own use of media in documenting the project and the role that media might play in their lives to inform others of what they had discovered about themselves/their communities. One pupil, however, who hadn’t expressed any thoughts on the role of the media at the start, now stated that ‘the media has a big role – telling you stuff that you don’t know about [and] it gives you warnings sometimes.’

Skills development
• Enquiry and communication

Learning outcome: the ability to empathise with the views and experiences of others.

• Participation and responsible action

Learning outcome: the ability to contribute to group discussions.

There was no direct evidence to suggest that pupils in either school were better able, as a result of the project, to contribute to group discussions, but they displayed behaviour indicative that they were becoming more active and confident in expressing their ideas and opinions, and were more focused through group working, particularly in listening to, and respecting, the views of others.

‘I was also delighted with how strong the level of concentration was with the group, and how much they all listened to each other and respected each other’s opinions and stories. I was also pleased that every single person contributed and it felt as though confidence levels were surging in all.’ Artist 1

‘They were eager to show and explain their [memory] boxes to all around them – this task became another method for them to find their voice and tell their own tale. They were growing as active citizens in front of our eyes.’ Artist 1

‘...[there is] a young man who suffers from extreme shyness when a camera enters the room or he is put on the spot ... On Friday when the video diary was first suggested, he refused to go and record his thoughts. But this afternoon, he was eager to sit in front of the camera and talk about the project and his box.’ Artist 1
‘One of the big differences for the group – there were some painfully shy kids – and they actively came out of themselves ... the kids did a lot of written work – and I think that surprised the teachers – they opted to write.’ Artist 1

‘The project was an excellent way to see how well the students understood and engaged in more complex ideas and discussions.’ Teacher 1

‘They have greatly improved their capacity to work in small groups and take responsibility for an end product ...They are very proud of the end art exhibition and their involvement in it, as a result self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities has increased.’ Teacher 2

Both artists developed approaches to involve the pupils in evidencing the project. Artist 1 used audio recording, drawing and writing to document pupils’ responses. Artist 2 developed an approach that explicitly developed pupils’ skills of enquiry and communication: specialised skills groups were established that had to communicate with one another to collate evidence. As part of this process the pupils created a ‘research area’ within school to function as a live discussion area and focal point as well as functioning as a ‘live art’ exhibition space. There was a wide range of groups:

- sound recording: interviews, local environment, wildlife
- filming: documenting whole project as well as pre-determined role within it
- photography: documenting whole project as well as pre-determined role within it
- researchers: internet – responding to all issues raised during project (urban growth, human land usage, local fauna etc., as well as researching related artists, such as Joseph Beuys and Mark Dion)
- collectors/curators: collection and arrangement of physical evidence – tracking, cataloguing, documenting and labelling objects collected
- interviewers: local people, museum staff, teachers and pupils
- mapping: sighting and habitats

Co-participative exchange
Exchange of skills, experience, expertise and knowledge between participants

Learning outcome: acquisition of new skills:
- to enhance creativity
- to encourage reflective practice
- to encourage lifelong learning
- to raise the awareness of development needs of pupils and the working practices of schools

Collaborative approaches to citizenship education were explored that were new to both teachers, museum staff (educators and curators) and artists:

As part of Alchemy—enquire, both schools undertook a collaborative approach planned with external partners that were delivered as suspended timetable events/activities at the museum and in the school. Previously, in both schools, citizenship had been taught through other subjects but not through suspended timetable activities/events or partnership activities.

‘[with the drama exercises led by Artist 1] suddenly our pupils were switched on, I saw them in a new light.’ Teacher 1

‘The teachers seemed surprised that the pupils were writing so much.’ Artist 1

‘I really liked the “energise” sessions used by the artist throughout the day. Really re-grouped the student back onto the main focus of the project. As a teacher you can sometimes “forget” how to be creative and this project showed how some complex issues could be addressed in the school environment.’ Teacher 1

‘The session where the students had to identify their best/worst memories was so interesting to watch. As the students became more engaged they really opened up. From speaking with Learning Support staff it was also an interesting insight into the psyche of some of the students.’ Teacher 1
'I found it hard to be free with the pupils usually; I learned from how the artist (School 2) had let them lead during the project.' Teacher 1

'The school was fortunate in that [the artist] established excellent working relationships with both staff and students. [The artist's] enthusiasm and creativity gave staff different ideas about innovative and engaging teaching that would work well with other groups throughout the school. The podcasts were a particularly different form of presentation and the school is keen to use these sorts of activities more – especially since pupil-led TV has started in school.' Teacher 1

'From taking part in the project the school is now keen to inject more creative teaching and learning into the citizenship curriculum. Also to establish "one-off" events that focus on citizenship issues for particular groups of students would further enrich their learning.' Teacher 1

'[this way of working] gave us the chance to think something through with someone else, the chance to have a conversation with someone else and share that with everyone.' Museum curator

'The artists would really raise some exciting issues, not only for the project but also for the Museum to respond to.' Museum curator

'... good to meet other artists (as well as some people I already know and have worked with).’ Artist 2

'[Artist 2] was also good with his group in a less obvious way; he was nurturing and encouraging, and the group responded to this.' Museum educator

'I learned some good ways of doing icebreaker activities and having used them once, I shall certainly use them again!" Museum educator

'It's given me more confidence to work with artists and schools in a variety of ways and it's something I would happily do again. I am looking forward to the coming project year.' Museum educator

'From a museum point of view, we want to engage with new audiences in new and exciting ways, so this type of project neatly fits with this. We want to develop high-quality learning experiences that engage with our users, and we want to develop innovative programming in conjunction with other educators and artists.' Museum educator

'[I am] learning how to work as a team and working hard to work as a team and not messing around a lot.' Pupil

'The curriculum and explanation of “citizenship” was useful. Access to all the partners on the day was very useful.' Artist 2

'Dissemation-wise, if the project leads to a more interesting and (most importantly) teachable method of tackling citizenship, then I would be happy with that. Seeing how the students engage with it will have a bearing as they may shape it themselves. In many ways it is simply an experiment. It will be interesting to see how I get on working with secondary students as most of my school residencies and workshops to date have been with primary.' Artist 2

'I gained a greater understanding of the issues facing the museum. [I] felt that my experience as a citizenship teacher and art practitioner were valid.' Artist (attending museum day)

'This has been a real learning experience for me – most of the projects I work on being drama based, they’re leading up to some kind of performance, so the last days are spent rehearsing and perfecting the piece. I have thoroughly enjoyed working towards a different kind of outcome. This has meant I’ve been able spend longer on the individual exercises rather than stopping to rehearse the final piece, and has meant I’ve been able to respond to changes in ideas and in the group dynamic right up until the last minutes I had with the group.' Artist 1

'This was a fantastic opportunity for [us] to work in a different way.’ Partner organisation

‘I really liked the fact that someone spoke about citizenship so that the artists had some background knowledge to work from before submitting their proposals.’ Partner organisation

‘... very exciting and full of possibilities for school children, their teachers and the wider community.’ Artist (attending museum day)
The artists’ approaches to developing skills in pupils appeared to differ.

In School 1, Artist 1 elicited creative responses from the pupils by using drama exercises, creative writing and drawing, and then independently, away from school — shaped these responses into an audio-visual narrative (a podcast with accompanying photomontage which documented the activity).

‘This group has strong imaginations, almost childlike from some of them, so it felt rewarding to give them an arena where their ideas — whether personal or fantastical — would be dealt with the same level of attention and respect.’ Artist 1

Through this approach, pupils were only partially engaged in the process of structuring the final outcome: the podcast was created by the artist, who wrote a script from the pupils’ recorded audio responses and edited together an accompanying montage of stills that documented the project. The creative process rested to an extent with the artist, who took on the responsibility of shaping the outcome. The pupils were, however, given an opportunity to reflect in private on their learning through the video diary sessions and in public through the final sharing event.

‘I have a good feeling about the outcome of this project. I spent the weekend writing up the script. Looking over the students’ work, there was an incredible amount they have created in only two days.’ Artist 1

‘The words were theirs, I just stitched it all together.’ Artist 1

In School 2 the sessions were structured by Artist 2 to ensure that the pupils’ use of their skills was central to the project. The creative activity was designed to serve as a vehicle for learning through enquiry and communication. Pupils worked in groups to research and demonstrate their findings through various media, and communicated their results both during the project, using poster presentation, and at the end, curating an exhibition of their findings at school and in the museum. As a result, in contrast to School 1, the pupils appeared to a greater extent to be motivated to assume ownership of their learning experiences and their ability to reflect on and communicate what they had learned.

To some extent this reflects the differing experiences of the artists working in their respective schools and their creative practices: Artist 1 was teaching pupils creatively but Artist 2 was more effectively teaching for creativity i.e. for the process-based and thinking skills of enquiry and communication to be transferred to the pupils. This distinction between teaching creatively and teaching for creativity is outlined by the Department for Education and Employment (NACCCE 1999) but essentially is the difference between the teacher (or artist) using their own creativity to deliver learning (creative teaching) and the teacher developing and tapping into pupils’ own creativity actively to engage them in the learning process (teaching for creativity).

‘At the end of the museum visit I had decided that rather than tailor my particular practice and approach to tie in specifically with the Egyptology and mummies, I would work around the themes of death and extinction. This would allow me to more easily employ a “process-based” approach to the project and fit my personal interests whilst still covering aspects of citizenship.’ Artist 2

Individual interviews with both artists at the sharing event served to underline this. Artist 2 was able to articulate how his approach is process based in order to equip pupils with the tools to develop their own creativity and engage in the project. He also mentioned the need to ‘hold back’, for self-restraint, in order to allow the pupils to discover things for themselves as part of the process.

The approach and attitude of the teachers towards the projects also differed. In School 2 the partnership was an active partnership, in which the artist acknowledged how ‘the teacher–artist partnership could make or break a project’. The teacher documented how she met regularly with the artist to reflect on the previous session and to ‘tweak forthcoming sessions in response to that’. In contrast, in School 1 the teacher took on a supporting role: ‘[I am] unsure what my approach would be. Normally I’d try to take a back seat and leave it to the session leaders/ experts … tried to leave the students to get on with the work, offering support when needed.’ On reflection Artist 1 highlighted that, ‘With hindsight, I should have briefed the
teachers prior to the start of the session so that they would be clear about the task. One teacher told me that she felt the task was too complex for the students’ ability and wasn’t right for them.’

Sustainability and legacy
As part of the interdisciplinary network sessions to inform the research and planning, groups of artists, scientists and museum professionals (curators and educators) discussed artists working with museum collections. Each group drew out key words from their discussions in order to map out common themes and links.

Each group also presented a short summary of their discussion and from these some common themes were identified:

• the cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural nature of museum collections
• interpretation of the collections
• the ability of the artist to subvert meaning
• bridging or crossing divides e.g. between taxonomies/art and science
• experimentation and risk-taking

Interestingly, one group – comprising artists and artist educators – discussed the role of artwork in encompassing different learning styles, saying that ‘artwork does what text can’t.’ This statement is central to the research; it is the focus of what the programme is examining; and it identifies what it is, specifically, that art and artists contribute to the programme.

Positive links have been established between the schools and the museum.

‘For example, the museum educator recently came to the school to discuss two further projects that the museum was trialling. A group of our students went to the museum to look at the Black History exhibition that Louise had suggested attending.’ Teacher 1

‘Areas of the project will be incorporated into existing scheme of works. For example, the release of big cats into the wild and the after effects may form a research project within the ecological relationships unit. The use of creative approaches to teaching will also be incorporated. It would be nice for pupils to visit the museum but this may not be possible because of finances.’ Teacher 2

This ongoing sharing via interdisciplinary sessions held throughout the project were a useful way of keeping the wider network of practitioners informed and involved; all relevant parties were able to contribute to the research and share in the planning as it progressed.

At the final sharing event, attended by a small, invited network of researchers, teachers, artists, partners, museum and gallery staff, and the researcher, participants were asked to consider the impact of seeing the work: what they might take away from both this experience and the group discussion that gave them an insight to the Alchemy–enquire approach: The responses were informative:

**Gallery educator**
‘Looking at the development of interdisciplinary approaches to collections. Artists at the forefront. "Ownership of process": how this develops in terms of pupil participation v teachers v artists.’

**Artist/ teacher**
‘Expand via more schools and sites. Make a publication/podcast into live performance?’

**Researcher**
‘Explore the role of narrative/anticipation, conflict, drama, “a memory is like something that is real” and how the brain works and therefore how it learns best – dramaturging the learning journey so that pupils learn through their shifting perceptions of the world.’

**Museum curator**
‘Have you started thinking about how you could help to develop artists’ practice through these projects yet?’

**Teacher**
‘Revisit projects already done in school! Buy some equipment to test Mediascape (software) in conjunction with the collection.’

**Researcher**
‘More investigation into the role of the artist? Why the artist? How do we evidence qualitative findings and learning? Still difficult for me!’
Teacher  ‘More pupil-led lessons … more use of display … exhibition space using pupil’s work.’

Artist 1  ‘Explore space, location, the environment of museums, galleries and stores.’

Creative Organiser  ‘How would we best support more teachers – especially to access this very rich learning?’

Artist 2  ‘Extend beyond the natural history of the UK? Science, paranormal, belief? Or people?’

Museum educator  ‘Looking at how museum/gallery collections stir personal response? How can you accommodate all these ranges of personal responses. How can artists ensure that their interaction can facilitate these personal responses?’

Artist  ‘Get this into more and more schools.’

Improving the process
Various areas of the project were identified as having potential for improvement:

• More time – There had been considerable time pressures on the teachers and artists to develop and deliver the projects. This had an impact on the amount of time available to plan, reflect, evaluate and learn from the processes and activities and the theories informing them, which could have been increased to the project’s advantage.

• Earlier clarification of roles – The artists felt not only that there were too many partners involved with too many demands, but also that the partners were not always clear of their roles.

• Teacher CPD re citizenship – With hindsight teachers could have been invited to the museum session to learn from the session on citizenship, and also to meet the artists to enable skills-transfer and to offer them some experience of what their pupils might engage in.

• Teaching and learning frameworks – Collaborative exploration (by museum educators, curators and teachers) of teaching and learning frameworks that might have informed the programme had been prevented by the time pressures to undertake the research.

A framework for Alchemy-enquire
A number of evaluative frameworks have been developed – and discussed elsewhere (Pringle 2006). Here, however, only the context of the current programme is defined and recommendations are made based on these findings. The Alchemy–enquire programme appears to deliver on all five of the generic learning outcomes of the GLO model, namely:

• increase in knowledge and understanding (teachers, pupils, museum educators, artists)

• increase in skills (teachers, pupils, museum educators)

• changes in attitudes and values (teachers, artists, pupils)

• evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity (pupils, teachers, artists)

• evidence of activity, behaviour, progression (pupils)

However, this GLO model does not take into account the processes or collaborative relationships that have led to the various outcomes.

One transferable model and potential 'best fit' for Alchemy-enquire appears to be the Contemporary Gallery Education learning framework, through which art practice informs and underpins each of the different aspects of the framework (Pringle 2006):

• Where learning happens (context)
  – personal – the prior knowledge, experience and motivation of the learner;
  – socio-cultural – the nature of the community of learners (group) and facilitation by the educator;
  – site-specific – the nature of the learning environment e.g. the history and geography of the gallery or other site (from the museum perspective, this could also embrace different collections).

• How learning develops (process)
  – collaborating – by valuing individual responses within a group, sharing learning, dialogue;
  – experimenting – by engaging, revealing, risk-taking, maintaining open-endedness;
– analysing & reflecting – by questioning, contextualising, reconsidering;
– engaging holistically – by responding on emotional and physical as well as cognitive levels.
• What the learning involves (active outcomes)
  – reflection – increased analytical/reflective thinking, articulation of learning;
  – meaning – using shared knowledge and skills;
  – engagement – increased involvement, commitment, passion/pleasure;
  – responsibility – taking ownership of individual and collaborative learning development and direction;
  – empowerment – increased cultural and self-awareness and confidence.

The teacher–artist partnership exists in this framework, their respective processes and practices contributing to both ‘How learning develops’ and ‘What the learning involves’. Future research might explore specifically how the collaborators contribute to which elements of the framework and from which elements they benefit. It would also be important to explore both the extent to which pupils were aware of the processes and the extent to which they developed a degree of ownership and responsibility for their learning.

An addition to the framework might simply map what the learning objectives of the project are to make explicit: what the pupils need to come away with in terms of curriculum outcomes. This framework could be viewed from the perspective of the learner, be that the pupil engaged in the project activity, the teacher in acquiring new skills, or the artist in planning the activity. The framework might also be mapped onto key national policy areas and issues where teaching and learning is concerned, including:
• developing and sharing cross-curricular approaches to teaching citizenship
• personalising learning through the interests of pupils
• teaching for creativity to equip pupils with skills of enquiry and communication

Recommendations

1. Explore and make explicit the dynamics and various roles within the curator–teacher–artist–researcher–pupil relationship. Map out key theoretical frameworks and explore links [constructivist approach to learning [individuals learning through the senses] in museums, for example] and alternative educational learning theories. Examine where there are overlaps and gaps?

2. Assess and define the needs and expectations of the learner (teacher, artist, pupil, curator).

3. Put the learner at the centre of any programme activity undertaken and then map out the learning journey for that learner in order to provide the necessary support and professional development and skills-transfer to help the learner to navigate the learning journey. This narrative approach could work well with the artist’s process-driven approach and the teacher’s need to ensure the citizenship learning objectives are met. The teachers, for example, were not directly placed at the centre of any learning here and yet confidence in teaching and assessing citizenship were both teacher development needs that could have been met. Such reflective practice prior to any activity with the class, exploring and exchanging their practice, and developing a collaborative approach from the outset, might have worked as professional development for both teachers and artists. Further, a collaborative experience at the outset might help to map out the activity’s key learning points and present opportunities to contextualise it within citizenship curriculum.

4. Define and build trust and ownership through smaller collaborative cluster groups (or action learning sets) consisting of curator, researcher, teacher, artist, pupils. These might be connected to the wider network through collaborative enquiry. This would help to generate a wider learning community with an increased shared pool of knowledge.

5. Consider more in-depth pupil-led approaches to incorporate into all of the above. Ultimately the emphasis must be on the ability of the pupils to learn and take ownership of their learning. To do this they need to be engaged, and equipped with the skills, confidence and relevant information to be facilitate the process.
References


Notes


2. Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium could not carry out their project work within a suitable time frame to be included in the second year research documentation and report.

Appendix A – Questionnaires

Citizenship questionnaire for secondary teachers

The Manchester Museum in partnership with Creative Partnerships and Artists & Education are currently undertaking a research project, funded by *engage enquire*, that explores how the arts in museums and working with artists can support citizenship education at key stage 3.

The aim of this questionnaire is to establish where secondary school teachers feel they are currently with teaching citizenship at key stage 3, identifying any issues facing secondary teachers teaching citizenship with a view to exploring ways that external partners, such as museums and artists, might better support teachers and pupils in the teaching and learning of citizenship.

There are 8 questions. Most have sub-sections. We are keen to hear your views, so some questions will also give you the opportunity to give your views on the major issues for secondary teachers in teaching citizenship.

All individual responses are anonymous and for research purposes only. This research project may from time to time require the need to quote individual responses either partially or in full but at no time will an individual be associated with any quote.

School name:

________________________________________

School Address and contact details:

________________________________________

________________________________________

If you would you like to find out more about the research project and opportunities for teachers to get involved in future activities supporting citizenship education, please email: bryony.bond@manchester.ac.uk
1. **Background information – the teacher**

   (please circle or write in your answers where appropriate)

   a) Your gender  
      Male       Female

   b) Your age range:
      20s        30s        40s        50s        60s

   c) How many years have you been teaching?
      <5         5–10       11–20       >20 years

   d) Which year group do you mostly teach?

   e) What is your position in school, what subject(s) do you teach and what is your highest qualification?

   Position:
   Subjects:
   Qualification:

   f) Is there a designated coordinator for citizenship at your school?
      Yes, it's me     Yes, but not me     No     Don't know

   g) As a teacher, have you carried out, or are you currently carrying out, any professional development or research/project work in citizenship education?
      Yes     No
      If yes, please give details and dates, if known:

   h) Would you like to undertake professional development in citizenship education?
      Yes     No

   i) Do you know of any citizenship projects with which your school has been involved that have involved external partners?
      If yes, please give details and dates, if known:
2. Background information – school factors

a) What resources do you have for teaching citizenship?

b) would you say your resources for teaching citizenship are:
   Good  Adequate  Poor

c) What additional resources would you like, if any?

   

   

d) How much time do you have for teaching citizenship per term?

   

   

e) Which subjects, if any, do you feel that your school rates as more important than citizenship?

   

   

f) Have you, or your school, completed the DfES ‘school self-evaluation tool for citizenship education’?
   Yes  No  Don't Know

   If Yes, how useful was it and what plans for action have been formulated to take it further?

   

   

3. How is citizenship currently being delivered?
   (please tick all that apply)
   - as discrete lessons with separate curriculum time
   - through other lessons: please state which lessons
   - through PHSE
   - through suspended timetable events/activities
   - through suspended timetable events/activities, planned with external partners (please state who these partners are)
   - pupil involvement in the life of the school
   - pupil involvement in the life of the wider community
   - other (please state)

4. Assessing citizenship

a) How would you rate your confidence from 1 (low) to 8 (high) in developing the following pupil skills as part of citizenship at key stage 3?
   - Pupils taking informed and responsible action?
   - Pupils expressing and justifying their viewpoints and those of others?
   - Pupils taking part in both school- and community-based activities?
   - Pupils reflecting on the process of participating?
   - Pupils having knowledge of, and respect for, identity and diversity?
   - Pupils having knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens?
   - Pupils developing skills of communication?
   - Pupils developing critical thinking and enquiry?
   - Pupils having knowledge of community-based voluntary groups?
   - Pupils’ ability to contribute to group and class discussions?
Appendices

b) Which types of assessment do you use for students' achievements or progress in citizenship at key stage 3?

e) What are the key areas of achievement as well as any gaps in their progress?

c) How confident are you about assessing pupils' progress in citizenship in terms of them not only having a broad understanding and knowledge but being able to reflect on their experiences in citizenship and pose questions and make evidence-based judgements?

5. What do you think are the main issues facing secondary teachers in teaching citizenship?

6. Current and future challenges and opportunities:
   How can citizenship education be improved so that teachers and pupils are best supported to develop the skills that will help them become active and informed citizens?

7. Any other comments you would like to add?

8. This next section to be completed if you are participating in The Manchester Museum project with artists in February 2007.
   a) Why did you, or the school, choose to take part in this project?
b) In your opinion, what is the purpose/objective of the project?


c) How effective do you think the workshops will be in achieving the objective(s)?


d) How well-informed do you feel about the project?


e) What skills or approaches, if any, have you picked up through the project: e.g. from the artist, pupils, museum staff?


f) How do you plan to follow up on these workshops in terms of citizenship education with this group of pupils?

Thank you for taking part.

Please return your completed questionnaire to the person who handed it to you, or by post:

Bryony Bond
The Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

Pupil questions

Pupil Reference:

School:

Date:

Age:

Gender:

1) How much do you already know about this project?

2) What do you think the project is about?

3) What do you think about the role of the media in your life?

4) What do you think are the issues that surround this project?
5) What sort of ideas do you think that the project will uncover?


6) What do you think of the information you are finding?


7) Why do you think that?


8) What do you think other people would think about that – your teachers, other people in the school, young people in other countries, or people in power?


9) Why do you think they would think that way?


10) Are you involved in any voluntary activity or community groups?


11) How relevant is Citizenship learning to you?


12) Is there anything else that you would like to add?


Appendix B – reflective diary

Name:

Date:

Role:

(e.g. teacher, creative practitioner, museum educator, research coordinator, CPD delivery)

In order to gain an insight into how different people’s roles and experiences in this project, please write below your diary of reflections, observations and thoughts.

For the various stages of the project (including those that are yet to occur), please write about:

a) your intuitions, anticipations and expectations of the project at individual stages and sessions;

b) your approach, response and participation in meetings and sessions – especially in proposal development;
c) any questions that occur to you, areas of interest that you want, on reflection, to explore further;

STAGE 2: The museum visit (artists and partners)

STAGE 3: Responding to the initial brief (artists and partners)

STAGE 4: Selection to submit a full proposal, even if your proposal was not selected (artists and partners)

STAGE 5: The artist CPD day at A&E to develop the full proposal (artists and partners)

You may identify particular participants, people, objects, experiences that took your interest.

Include any key moments for you that particularly sparked your interest, changed your approach or failed to do so.
(please write as much as you like)
STAGE 6: Developing and submitting your proposal (artists and partners)

STAGE 7: Selection of proposal by teachers, even if your proposal was not selected by teachers (artists, teachers and partners)

STAGE 8: Project planning (artists, teachers and partners)

STAGE 9: School activity (artists, teachers and partners)

STAGE 10: The legacy of the project – dissemination, further opportunities (artists, teachers and partners)
Appendix C – programme for museum day

ARTISTS’ DAY AT MANCHESTER MUSEUM
Alchemy at The Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester, is a project that works with artists to find new interpretations of collections through artists creating new work in collaboration with academics, curators and researchers. We are embarking on a new part of the Alchemy project as part of enquire⁷ and with several exciting partners: Creative Partnerships, Artists & Education, North West Museums Hub, to research the particular benefits of working with artists in gallery-based education.

On Wednesday 29 November 10 am to 4 pm we are inviting a number of artists to come and find out about the Museum and the Alchemy – enquire project. We hope to inspire artists to think about how their work might present exciting connections with the Museum’s collections and offer opportunities for work with young people.

We want to work with artists to develop a new approach to making education programmes at the Museum, where artists are given the opportunity to research collections and are supported to devise creative education sections that enhance their practice.

As a focus for this project we are looking at making connections between our Ancient Egyptian collections and the material of contemporary funerary practices. We hope to look at ideas around how the physical body is treated today – how the body is contained, how the dead are represented, and what contemporary concerns might be for an ‘afterlife’. We hope to link ideas around these themes with the delivery of citizenship at key stage 3 (11–13 years), potentially looking at diverse cultural practices within a UK; exploring human rights issues, society’s responsibilities to the dead and even looking at the ecological footprints we leave behind.

This Wednesday is about introducing invited artists to some of the collections and ideas with which we wish to work, in order to equip artists with the information they will need to make an informed decision about how they could be involved. At the end of the day artists will be invited to spend an hour collecting information (in whatever format they feel comfortable with, be that drawing, photographing, recording, exploring spaces, writing etc.) in order to submit a description of how they might like to work with young people exploring these themes and ideas.

From these submissions several artists will be selected to continue to work on the project and develop their ideas further. Unfortunately we cannot pay artists for this day, but we hope that the day will provide information that may prove useful in education work and it also offers an opportunity to become involved in a paying project. Teas, coffees and lunch will be provided.

Wednesday 29 November

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.00 am</td>
<td>Introduction to Alchemy – enquire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am</td>
<td>Tour of Museum storeroom and stored collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15 am</td>
<td>Tea &amp; coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.45 am</td>
<td>What is Citizenship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.30 pm</td>
<td>How can artists work in education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15 pm</td>
<td>Practical session – Time for artists to gather information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLEASE BRING ANY EQUIPMENT YOU MAY NEED (SKETCHBOOK/CAMERA, ETC.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.15 pm</td>
<td>Tea &amp; Coffee and plenary session for questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00 pm</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ The enquire programme is managed by engage in association with Arts Council England. enquire is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for children, schools and families as part of the Strategic Commissioning Museums Education Programme.
Appendix D – Artists’ brief

ALCHEMY–ENQUIRE AT MANCHESTER MUSEUM
Alchemy–enquire is about using action research to find new ways to bring about partnerships and models of working. There are different elements to the project: museum spaces and collections, schools and young people, and participants’ professional development. We hope you leave today inspired and not too overwhelmed!

After today, in order to continue the project, we’d like to work with artists who want to develop themselves further as an artist–educator and would be inspired to work with museum collections and young people in secondary education. We’d like to ask you to respond to these questions about your experience today and to give us just an initial idea of you and your work in relation to the Alchemy–enquire project.

Alchemy–enquire may not be able to work with everyone who attended today. There may, however, be opportunities in the future to work with museums and collections in the region. Please email your responses to alchemy@manchester.ac.uk no later than 5 pm Wednesday 6 December. We will contact you all as soon as possible after 6 December.

Artform:

1. How does your work relate to the issues and ideas we discussed today?
   For example, do you think you already work with similar themes; would you like to pursue any of the subjects we discussed today; would working with these collections help the development of your work?

2. Could you see ways in which young people could be actively involved in issues around your work and in making their own work?
   For example, does your work raise issues to debate; could young people contribute in some way to the development of the programme; how could young people be facilitated to make their own interpretations?

3. What professional development would make a difference to your practice as artist and educator?
   For example, would certain training be useful (lesson planning/subject-specific information/working with young people); would you like to spend time in a school; would you like to spend time with museum educators?
   (Not all suggestions will be possible and this section does not affect whether you will work on the project or not – we do not mind how much professional development you would like!!!)

Please feel free to include any additional material. If it is difficult to email this, please ensure your answers and information reach The Manchester Museum by the end of Wednesday 6 December.

All your responses and ideas will be treated in the strictest confidence and all responses are, and will remain, anonymous unless otherwise requested by you.
Phase 2, 2007–8

Introduction

In July 2007 the scope of the Alchemy–enquire programme was broadened to include the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, in Preston and Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium. The overall aim of the Alchemy–enquire project is for museums and galleries to work in partnership with schools and artists in order to investigate and evidence the learning benefits for all participants.

The research sites

This research report considers data collected from work that was undertaken by two teams: one comprising The Manchester Museum, a team of three artists and a Manchester secondary high school, and the second made up of two artists, a Blackpool secondary high school and the Harris Museum and Art Gallery.

The students from both settings were predominantly white and male (only four girls participated in the Blackpool school cohort). The socio-economic backgrounds of both groups were similar, with a high proportion of the young people coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Each of the two high schools identified a lead teacher who, in addition to embracing the aims of the project, supported their school’s set of collaborating artists organisationally and sometimes pedagogically.

Electronic contact between the project’s significant stakeholders was established via an online communications hub: Base-Camp. The success, or otherwise, of this form of communication will be considered below.

The education officers at The Manchester Museum and the Harris Museum and Art Gallery took responsibility for ensuring access to museum/gallery space and rooms, collections and curatorial staff in order that all the active participants – the young people, the artists and the teachers – could work at achieving the aims of the Alchemy–enquire project.

Selection of the artists

In the first instance artists wanting to be considered submitted a curriculum vitae; the museum educators were then to select a shortlist from these applicants. These artists were then asked to develop proposals so that participating schools could choose one that met their specific requirements. In the event the artists chose to collaborate with each other so all the artists took part in the programme. The reasons for this approach will be considered below.

Research ethics

Throughout the project the schools took responsibility for ensuring that parental consent had been sought for the young peoples’ participation in the project and for being filmed and observed, in both the museum and the school context. Also, both researchers sought verbal permission from all participants including teachers and their students whenever possible. At the Blackpool school the researcher also allowed the students to film their work and one another.

Mapping the report

This report falls into two sections. In section 1 pivotal moments of the project are used to clarify a number of issues, including the role of the researcher as it is manifested within action research. This section also highlights and discusses examples of data. This facilitates the identification of a number of important research questions that have evolved as well as an assessment of whether the aims of the Alchemy–enquire project were realised. The examination of why the artists chose to work collaboratively rather than submitting individual proposals also includes an appraisal of activities that were aimed at continuing professional development (CPD) for the participants.

Evaluating the Alchemy–enquire project using action research

An initial research question was used to orientate the project:

‘How might interactions between museums, artists, teachers and students foster learning engagements?’

The question contains two important elements. The first centres on ‘interactions’ and therefore requires a critical understanding of the actions that participants were involved in. The second element has ‘learning’ as its focus. Here what is understood as ‘learning’ needs to be clarified and judgements made about the learning that has occurred.
In addressing this question the role of the researcher needs to be made clear within the methodological framework of action research. One strength of action research is that it integrates the development of practice into the construction of research knowledge in a cyclical process. As Somekh notes (2005: 89), ‘instead of being research on a social setting and the people within it, it is research from inside that setting.’ (author’s own emphasis) The report will focus, therefore, on a number of key interactions involving museums, artists, teachers and students which will, in turn, clarify the role of the researcher within the project, as well as addressing the issue of learning.

Observing the interactions between the artists, curators, collections and teachers

The project began with two research days when the artists and teachers had an opportunity to spend time at one of the two museums. They were able to access specific collections, meet museum curators and the education and learning staff. This day was part of the project, its aim to assist artists in writing a project proposal for a school.

Research day at The Manchester Museum

The research day at The Manchester Museum was coordinated by the lead officer of the secondary learning team. Refreshments and general introductions were followed by visits to four collections including ‘Living Cultures’, botany, palaeontology and arthropods. Each collection shared some similarities. For instance, the collections are not accessible to the general public but are stored for curatorial (as opposed to aesthetic) purposes instead, and in all instances there are vast numbers of items in the collections.

The researchers needed to evaluate whether the overall organisation of the event had assisted in progressing the aims of the day, and to observe the artists as they made contact with, and reacted to, both the museum collections and the curatorial staff. Two modes of documentation were used: one researcher made written records and the other filmed aspects of the day. In both instances the researchers were aware that neither the written nor the filmed observations should be seen as objective accounts because they would be filtered through the researcher’s own subjective positions. However, inclusion of such subjective accounts, whilst frowned upon within certain research paradigms, is an integral component of action research particularly when the researcher is actively reflexive as a cautionary measure.

The event was well organised and well executed. Acts like providing refreshments denote a level of sensitivity to the fact that some of the artists had travelled quite considerable distances. It also allowed individuals to begin the process of getting to know people. Each of the four curators clearly knew when the artists would be arriving and the length of time that was available which enabled them to talk to the artists as well as showing them the collections. Shepherding six adults around a labyrinth of corridors is not easy but the move from one collection store to the next was relatively seamless. Each of the curators were welcoming, clearly enthusiastic about the project and more than willing to share their knowledge. In brief, it was evident that the curators were committed to the project’s aim of working with artists and schools so as to enhance the possibilities for learning.

The data that was collected through observing the interactions between the artists, curators and collections at The Manchester Museum can be categorised into two main strands. The first strand centres on the work undertaken by the curators when introducing the artists to each of the collections. The second concentrates on the artists, and their responses to both the curators and the collections. The significance of each of these strands will deepen as this report progresses.

When considering the curators’ contributions to the day Michel Foucault’s notion of ‘discourse’ has been found to be helpful. Normally the term ‘discourse’ is used as a linguistic concept, but Foucault broadened its meaning to include not just what people say but also what they do. As Hall notes:

Discourse constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others.

(Hall 1997: 44)
So, within Foucault’s terms, a discourse rules not just how we can and cannot talk or write or conduct ourselves in relation to a topic but, by definition, it disallows or rules out other ways of talking, or of conducting ourselves, including how we construct knowledge within the context of a museum. In brief, museums do not simply display items for public viewing; they ‘generate representations and attribute value and meaning in line with certain perspectives or classificatory schemas which are historically specific. They do not so much reflect the world through objects as use them to mobilize representations of the world past and present.’ (Lidchi 1997: 160). Carbonell echoes these sentiments,

... Museums uphold specific accounts of the past through the objects they choose to collect, and the expository juxtapositions they choose to make. Museums embody and exhibit social values. Values necessarily operate to discriminate, to emphasise and downplay, to make visible and to put away... (Carbonell 2004: 563)

Looking at the data that centred on the curators and the collections it is evident that The Manchester Museum is in a continual process of reflecting upon its own practises. This agitation is underpinned by its own institutional awareness, that it does not simply reflect natural distinctions but that it also actively creates cultural ones.

This notion was strongly emphasised within the ‘Living Cultures’ collection, where the curator was able to offer an accessible historical overview that highlighted the political imperative underpinning both what museums collected and how this was then displayed. For example, it was explained how many of the objects were collected as part of the spoils of nineteenth-century imperialism, when the British Empire was at its zenith. As the curator noted, many of the exhibits that in that collection were mostly made, and used by, people who have, until relatively recently, been labelled as ‘simple’, ‘savage’, ‘primitive’ or ‘exotic’, all of which could be summarised as ‘the other’. The curator explained how, in asking the question ‘are museums racist?’ The Manchester Museum was itself shifting from its ‘patriarchal legacy’ to one ‘that’s attempting to listen to and engage with the public through a number of different forums’. It was stressed by a curator that the term ‘Living Cultures’ was in itself a symbolic way of emphasising the point that ‘the objects need to come to life ... sanitising them makes them devoid of life.’ Lord, who herself adopts a Foucauldian perspective, reiterates many of these sentiments. She writes:

The museum can be – and has been – characterized as an Enlightenment institution whose power to collect and display objects is a function of capitalism and imperialism, and whose power to form individuals is exercised through the careful and ordered deployment of knowledge within an institutionally controlled and publicly monitored space. (Lord 2006: 2)

An examination of the film documentation saw the emergence of certain traits: the passion with which the curators demonstrated and talked about ‘their’ collections, for example. Their intimate knowledge of the collections made it feel as if the objects almost belonged to them. In this sense there seemed to be an affinity with the way that an artist might talk about their work. Despite this sense of ownership there seemed to be no reluctance on the part of the curators as regards sharing the collections with other people. Indeed, their expressions and gestures and their willingness for the artists to touch, and ask questions about, the objects, suggested that the curators appeared positively to delight in opening the collections to others. Moreover, one curator’s comment that access can ‘make curators rethink their exhibitions’ seems to support this apparent openness. This approach may have been engendered in part by the relationships that curators have with academic researchers (a by-product of the fact that the museum is part of the University of Manchester); it may also arise, however, as a result of the established Alchemy project, through which artists have worked with ‘the museum’, in its broadest sense, to develop their practice. Certainly, all the curators spoke positively about their previous experience of working with artists, and referred to ways in which artists had drawn their attention to new facets of the objects in their collections.

Unsurprisingly, much of the artists’ attention was directed at simply looking at the amassed objects. On numerous occasions they photographed specific items. Many of their questions were directed at practical issues, such as identifying which objects could be handled by the young people and whether there was space within the museum for ‘a physical performance’ to occur.
They also expressed interest and awe at the mechanisms used by the museum for storing the collections, which include different coloured filing boxes, glassed-topped trays and sliding racks. At times personal predilections became discernible. It was evident, for example, that one of the artists was interested in the possibility of using objects and artefacts in a 'mystical' way; such an interaction between the young person and the object might result in 'energy being released' or 'healing occurring', or insects might be considered as having 'magical qualities'.

Similarly, it was noted by another artist that ancient bones had the capacity to 'transport you to another world'. This idea was developed a little by the curator for palaeontology, who introduced the notion that the young people might use the bones, rocks and fossils to think more 'in terms of geological time' and, thus, that through the artefacts the students might have a 'window into the past'. It was evident from another that she was beginning to play with an idea that involved the young people becoming collectors themselves, where they, too, might construct display boxes. Both the curators and the representative from the learning team warmly accepted this and many other ideas, including one that mooted using the museum space for 'some kind of physical performance where sounds and visual displays could be combined'.

A strong feeling of excitement characterised the interaction of artists with curators and objects as the artists were led through the vaults, corridors and cabinets of collections. The film footage shows them constantly touching objects, asking questions when shown certain exhibits, and asking to see inside cabinets and shelving. Again, this intense excitement and interest in the objects seems to be something that the curators and artists shared. Interestingly, some of the questions, including those that centred around the 'healing' and 'magical' properties of objects, introduced thought processes that were markedly 'different', particularly in the context of the stories that the curators were weaving around the objects. The curators responded to such questions, however, by engaging with this new way of thinking.

One artist had previously carried out her own research in the museum in the botanical and the arthropod collections and as she mingled now with the curators and explored the collections, her confidence and familiarity with the artefacts was captured in the film footage. Two other artists had not had this previous access but looked relaxed and were happy and able to ask questions and explore. This comfortable and open atmosphere can be attributed to the enthusiasm of the curators.

The final part of the research day consisted of a meeting between the three artists and two teachers from the participating Manchester high school, including the 'lead teacher'. This latter was able to answer some of the artists' practical concerns: how many students were to be involved in the project (twelve), the age of the students (Year 8), and the gender mix of the group (all boys). The lead teacher was also able to explain that although she herself was part of the school's humanities department, specialising in history, the school would not be asking the artists to direct their proposals towards any particular historical epoch or topic. The main motivation for the school's involvement was for the boys to capitalise on the creative experiences that would materialise as a consequence of working with an artist and interacting with the museum.

Finally it was emphasised that the practical work undertaken by the artists and the young people had to be completed by the end of December. This deadline was set within the parameters of the enquire project and was therefore non-negotiable even though, as was noted by one artist, 'the time issue becomes counter-productive to the quality of the work'.

**Research afternoon at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery**

The research team is conscious that, in describing two similar projects in two similar locations, one is likely to be seen in more positive terms than the other. It must be stressed that the differences between The Manchester Museum and the Harris Museum and Art Gallery are so markedly diverse that to examine one against the other as if examining like with like is neither tenable nor productive. These differences coalesce mainly around the discrepancy in size between the two. The Harris Museum and Art Gallery is considerably smaller than the Manchester Museum and therefore lacks the physical capacity to house large volumes of archived materials. A major part of the collection centres on Fine and Decorative Art and Textiles, but there is a small section on history with some emphasis on local history, with a photographic exhibition of Preston. In line with the museum's size, its staff is small. Those who have responsibilities
for specific collections are referred to as ‘keepers’. As this name might suggest, their remit has a greater emphasis on maintaining and displaying the collection than on engaging with the community through the collections.

This area of the report will focus on interactions as they occurred at the Harris Museum and Gallery. One researcher documented their observations of this project in writing. An analysis of these events, and their relationship to learning, will be made with an awareness of the contextual variables in which such things are embedded.

Three artists went to the research day at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery Museum, as well as a ‘lead’ (history) teacher from a Blackpool High School, and the museum’s coordinator for education. The teacher had already had an opportunity to meet the artists before the museum visit, and had already expressed an interest at this meeting in a proposal created for a specific group of children whom, it was felt, would benefit particularly from being involved in the project, and its strong practical element. Described as ‘academically weak’ – some having statements of special educational need – this was group of sixteen Year 8 pupils to whom she was teaching a module on Islamic Civilisation.

The introduction to the museum was conducted over an afternoon and the lead teacher was present throughout. The event began in the museum café where the artists, teacher and museum educator were able to discuss what they might gain from the tour. It was immediately apparent that the suggested Islamic theme would be problematic, because the museum did not have any collections that related directly to this subject, but in an effort to meet the teacher’s needs – needs that the artists, too, had begun to mull over – the museum educator had already been working with the keeper for Decorative Art to find objects in their collection that might relate to Islamic Art. It was proposed that the tour around the museum would be primarily a tour of the galleries, where any objects that might relate to Islamic art would be flagged up. The keeper for Decorative Art would then show a pre-selected group of objects from their collection that might have the potential to be linked to Islamic art.

The artists expressed two concerns at this point. First, they felt constrained by the remit of understanding Islamic Art as the primary learning aim for the proposal, because such an aim would undoubtedly ‘narrow down the approach’ that they could take. More specifically, one artist was concerned that the theme would make it ‘difficult for her to draw on her own art practice as a way of learning’. Secondly, the artists were disappointed about the lack of open access to the museum’s private collections. It was explained that logistically, as the keeper’s time was primarily spent changing the collections on display (indeed they were involved in a change of exhibition at the time), it would not be possible for the private collections to be accessed.

The tour of the museum was therefore made within the described constraints. Artefacts that could be related to the theme of Islam were brought to the attention of the artists and the teacher. This included a painting by the Victorian Orientalist Frederick Leighton entitled Portions of the Interior of the Grand Mosque at Damascus and cigarette cases and perfume bottles bearing abstract decorative patterns. One of the artists commented that his interest was in the Harris Museum and Art Gallery’s collection of contemporary art, and that he had hoped to be given access to their archive of recently acquired paintings, but again it was made clear that no access to the archive would be possible. However, an opportunity was made for the artists to view an exhibition of work by contemporary painters that was at that time closed to the public. In particular, they looked at an exhibition by contemporary artist Lubaina Himid, which consisted of life-size plywood cut-outs of African slaves painted in bold and colourful patterns.

In accordance with the planned schedule, the group met the keeper of Decorative Art. She presented the group with objects that had been selected from their archived collections. These included Victorian tiles with geometric designs, a series of bags from the Middle East, visiting-card cases with Islamic-influenced designs and a book of fabric swatches with abstract patterns from India. These objects were taken out of storage boxes and were handled using protective gloves. The artists were then allowed to handle the objects wearing the gloves. The researcher was struck by how the act of having to be gloved heightened the care with which objects were handled and engendered a sense of reverence. Having commented on this, the notion of talking about ideas of ‘reverence’ and ‘being reverent with objects’ with the students was discussed. Following the keeper’s talk there was an opportunity for the artists to begin to talk through both possible
ideas for their proposals and ways that they could try to work with the collections on offer at the Harris Museum and Gallery.

Some conclusions about the research days
Assessing the day in Manchester, it is possible to identify certain strengths and some weaknesses. The structural organisation of the day was excellent. The aims for the day were clear to everyone involved, and the kind of organisation necessary for all the variables implicit within the project, including museum personnel and the collections, to work together had been clearly established. This strength arises from professional relationships that have in all likelihood been honed over a period of time.

It was also apparent that the curators shared a common philosophy in relation to their collections where the theme of widening accessibility was in evidence. They were all in favour of certain items being handled – both by the artists and subsequently by the students. The place and significance of ‘hands-on’ experiences within pedagogical encounters has been clearly developed within academic literature (see, for example, Oppenheimer 1968a, 1968b, 1972; McLean 1993). Xanthoudaki argues that such experiences enhance opportunities for learning, because they are premised on the participative, exploratory, activity-based, informal and individual character of the encounters with original artefacts (1993).

In many ways the research day was an opportunity for the artists to get an idea of the boundaries developed by the Manchester Museum in relation to ‘hands-on’ practices and interaction with artefacts. As has already been noted, the museum itself is currently in the process of effecting a transition that aims to trouble the boundaries between spectator, artefact and physical space. So in asking questions such as ‘may I touch it?’ and ‘is it ok for me to use my camera?’ two points are being considered by the artists. The first is that they are clearing the ground in terms of what will and what will not be acceptable when the school eventually arrives. Second, their questions also tap into the heart of the museum’s evolving discourses in relation to museum objects, their symbolic place and significance in contemporary times.

Whilst the day was extremely successful in introducing the artists to the curators and to the collections, it is nevertheless questionable whether sufficient time was made available to allow the kinds of individual browsing and contemplation that could then be used to make realistic and informative judgements when constructing a proposal for the school. As Stronck (1983) highlights, there is a need within a context such as a museum or a gallery for ‘unstructured time to make sense of the confusion of a novel setting’. Additionally, there were certain items of information that might have been extremely helpful to the artists and which might have guided their looking and questioning in a more productive way. For instance, if the three artists had known that the group would comprise twelve students and that it would be an all-boys group, would this have led them to look at the collections in different ways?

The project at the Harris Museum and Art Gallery was well executed, particularly as it was carried out within a number of constraints. The Harris Museum and Gallery lacks space – unlike the Manchester Museum. The rooms where archives are stored are cramped to the point where there are health and safety issues in relation to the numbers of people who can access them. There is also a severe shortage of rooms available for meetings. The room where the keeper of Decorative Art gave her talk and showed objects from the collection had, therefore, had to be booked well in advance and against considerable competition. The physical spaces that could be offered for groups to engage with the collections were likewise restricted and this in turn limited the possibilities for lively interactions with the museum’s collections.

What was interesting about the Harris experience, and is also markedly different from that at the Manchester Museum, was that the lead teacher had some preconceived notions of what she wanted to achieve from the participation. The hope was that interactions between artists, museum artefacts and the young people would result in a greater understanding of Islamic Civilisation, a subject directly linked to the curriculum. There are three points that it is important to stress in relation to this: the first centres on learning; the second focuses on the museum and its objects, whilst the third relates to the artists’ responses.

In general, learning within museums and galleries is perceived in highly positive terms because, it is argued, such contexts have the capacity to ‘give richness and life to the learning experience’ (Bowker 2002: 125). It is also argued that such learning
experiences will be further enhanced if a number of issues and variables are addressed. For example, Rennie and McClafferty (1996) suggest that teachers should integrate visits with their teaching programme in ways that complement the learning activities at school. They go on to suggest that teachers should be encouraged to undertake preliminary visits to the museum before the students’ visits so that they are better placed to direct the young people’s attention, making it more purposeful. Finally, they note that the students’ personal backgrounds must be considered in relation to the visit. There is evidence to suggest that students who have been prepared for visits by their teachers will display an enhanced capacity to concentrate and will learn more from the experience (Gennaro 1981; McKenzie 1986). In summary, it would seem that effective learning within the context of locations such as museums and galleries is maximised when there has been some pre-visit preparation, when a clear focus has been developed, and when visits are integrated into the curriculum.

In this instance a considerable number of the children who were to participate had learning difficulties. If the decision of the lead teacher to maintain the project’s relationship with the curriculum is read against this kind of backdrop, familiar as she was with the pupils, it is possible to say that she was in very many ways laying certain foundations so as to make the most of the opportunities for the young people’s learning.

It is possible to appreciate from the description above that the capacity of the museum staff to meet the lead teacher’s needs in relation to Islamic Civilisation was severely curtailed. Arguably, the museum staff were also hampered because, whilst the lead teacher had identified a topic as a potential research area, it was effectively left to the museum keeper to identify artefacts that, within her understanding, had an association with Islamic Civilisation. As observed, a range of visual stimuli including pictures and objects were produced because the staff made a link between these artefacts and Islam – particularly Islamic Art where there is an emphasis on pattern. This process, where the museum strove to work within the teacher’s remit and produce objects that linked with her objectives, prompts the second of our research questions:

What is the significance of museum objects in relation to learning?

It should be noted at the outset that in museum learning information and concepts are not transmitted to visitors in a common way, with a single expected outcome (Hooper-Greenhill 1991; Walsh-Piper 1994). How a viewer makes sense of an object when handling it or how information about an item is decoded is relative to the individual (Falkirk & Dierking 1995). To expand:

The philosophy of learning with objects is based on the capacity of the object to stimulate all the senses, to lead, through active participation, to the assimilation of new information and, finally to relate the latter to previous knowledge and experience and compare it with the perceptions of others.

(Hooper-Greenhill 1994: 232)

However, what the above quotation fails to stress – although it is implied – is the question of interpretation. Here Lord’s (2006) explications as they relate to interpretation have been found helpful. She writes:

What every museum displays, in one form or other, is the difference inherent in interpretation. Interpretation is the relation between things and the words used to describe them, and this relation always involves a gap ... without interpretation, without representing a relation between things and conceptual structures, an institution is not a museum, but a storehouse.

(Lord 2006: 5)

These two quotations effectively highlight a number of tensions that relate directly to objects and their relationship to learning. On the one hand, it is possible to appreciate how objects can be used to kindle and arouse feelings, emotions and so on; indeed, a momentary return to The Manchester Museum experience recalls how links were being made with both ‘magic’ and ‘healing’. Meanwhile, thinking in terms of interpretation, the Harris Museum and Gallery, in its bid to serve the teacher’s agenda, had identified various artefacts that, in the curator’s view, linked to Islam, but which seemed to provoke a mixed response from the artists. True, the objects when handled with gloves had evoked ‘reverence’. But apart from that, there was little to suggest that the objects stirred them so that they began
to offer interpretations. In this respect it is possible to perceive the objects as things that have been 'stored' rather than objects that linked to 'conceptual structures'.

In looking at the Harris project, attention has been drawn to a number of concerns about the objects and their relationship to learning: the limitations of objects to 'service' a particular subject area, plus issues when there are differences in individual agendas in terms of expectations for the project.

The first potential problem is the lead teacher's particular set of expectations for the project, focusing on how, through their participation, the young people will gain a greater understanding of Islamic Civilisation.

As has been noted, the lead teacher had already assumed a considerable degree of responsibility for establishing this focus, and ordinarily this would be familiar territory for a teacher and one that goes some way to guarantee successful learning within the context of museums. Additionally, this focus emerged from a curriculum that the teacher is mandated to pursue. Notions of 'learning' are scripted for schools through the National Curriculum in the same way that museums are caught within discursive practices that stipulate what sorts of institution it is possible for them to be. This project, however, offered the teacher an opportunity to depart from normalised practices.

One such departure coalesces around notions of 'participation'. Rather than having prime responsibility for the young people's learning, the teacher here would be sharing this with the other participants. In order for the teacher to do this, however, she and all the participants, including the museum staff, artists and researcher, would have to understand the underpinnings of action research. There is a wide range of approaches to action research. Noffke (1997) groups these into three dimensions: the professional, the personal and the political. Somekh offers a succinct clarification of each. She notes that,

the first focuses on improving what is offered to clients in professional settings, the second is concerned with social action to combat oppression. The third, the personal, not necessarily separated from either of the others, is concerned with factors such as developing 'greater self-knowledge' and a 'deeper understanding of one's own practice'.

(Somekh 2005: 90)

Given this clarification of what is embedded within action research, it is possible to detect a number of shortcomings in the way that the Alchemy–enquire initiative pursued its ideals. First, the project lacked the kind of time that gives people the capacity to think, confer, consult and negotiate. The second time consideration is historic. The changes undertaken by The Manchester Museum as regards 'what is offered to clients in professional settings' has already been described. The Harris Museum and Art Gallery will be undertaking a similar appraisal of its practices, but its trajectory will not be the same, and any differences should be recognised within the overall framing of the Alchemy–enquire project.

The professional responsibilities of teachers must also be understood historically. It may be true that teaching is today experiencing something of a sea change and notions of 'creativity' are now creeping into the curriculum, but the profession as a whole has been under close surveillance to ensure that the needs of their 'clients' have been being met. Again, it should be anticipated that time needs to be made available across the project if 'learning' is to become a collaborative endeavour rather than a singular responsibility.

Finally, given the feedback and other available data, it is evident that part of the attraction of the Alchemy–enquire project for the artists was the possibility for 'exploring and developing their practice within the museum and learning environments' (extracted from the 'Call for Artists' advertisement) – an embedded ideal of action research. But, as described above, the artists felt both constrained by the topic of Islamic Civilisation and uninspired by the artefacts, a situation that impeded the possibilities for development of practice. Combined with what might be described as a lack of fluidity within the Harris Museum and Gallery, this limited the opportunities for 'greater self-knowledge' which could then have led to a 'deeper understanding of one's own practice'.

In summary, the terms of reference for the project as a whole needed greater clarity. There was ambiguity between what was an individual's responsibility and what was to be a collective endeavour. It is quite clearly stated in the 'Call for Artists' advertisement that part of the artists' role was to 'develop a project proposal for submission to the museums partners and then schools'. The teachers, meanwhile, were of the opinion that
their role was to ‘work in partnership with a museum and an artist to develop and record a project’. It is easy to see how this could be confusing in terms of offering a focus. Similarly, one can see that this might detract from the professional autonomy of the artist. This lack of clarity, together with the lack of time available to thrash out some fundamental problems, contributed to the withdrawal of one of the artists from the project (see section 2 below).

In terms of the overall focus, it was necessary to identify a different slant to the research project. So, rather than Islamic Civilisation, the artists and the teacher capitalised on the exhibition of Lubaina Himid’s life-sized plywood cut-outs of African slaves, some tenuous links being made between the bright patterns of these and those found in Islamic Art. Whilst this focus did provoke learning among the young people, it did not, from the teacher’s perspective, ‘enhance their understanding of Islamic history’. Moreover, by the project’s second session, she felt that ‘History had gone and it was Art only.’

At this juncture in the report, the research team would like to use this particular snapshot of the Alchemy-enquire project to consider the role of the researcher, and particularly as it was played out within the Harris Museum research day. Arguably, given that the project as a whole was framed within an action research methodology, there was an opportunity for the researcher to assume a more active role within the workings of the partnership: to ‘research from inside that setting’. There is, therefore, the possibility within the parameters of action research for the researcher to extend his/her role in order to be more active in supporting the participants. Very often such support is encompassed within the notion of ‘facilitator’ and involves working with the participants to negotiate boundaries, and includes developing a focus of study. But to negotiate working relationships where particular issues of power and control have to be addressed requires time, and clearly, here, opportunities for such a role to emerge were severely hampered because of the time limitations. Perhaps if this role had emerged, however, it might have alleviated some of the considerable frustrations that were experienced.

Observing the artists at work with the young people in the context of the museum

The project’s second pivotal phase centres on the interactions of the young people with the artists, museum staff and objects at the museum. The twelve boys from the Manchester High School made three visits to The Manchester Museum, whilst the thirteen students from Blackpool made one visit. The reasons behind this disparity will be explained below.

As has been noted above, the artists had chosen to work collaboratively, so in Manchester there was a partnership between three artists, whilst two had joined forces in Blackpool/Preston.

This section aims to detail some of the salient and significant features of the museum visits. A description of the individual artists’ interests and expertise, providing an idea of what each was contributing to the project, will be followed by an examination/discussion of firstly the Manchester Museum visits and then the Harris Museum and Gallery experience. A series of reflections in relation to the visits concludes the section.

The Alchemy-enquire artists

The Manchester group consisted of two visual artists and a poet. Artist 1’s art practice draws on anthropology, in particular maritime folklore and the history of artefacts. She materialises these interests through sculpture, drawing and animation. Artist 2 makes sculptural interventions in the environment, and she also uses photography, drawing and printmaking to explore and alter our perception of the environment. Artist 3 is a performance poet and playwright, who also runs laughter workshops.

The Harris Museum artists were all visual artists with a variety of interests. Artist 4’s work explores the fragments and traces of social history contained in material objects through digital photography, most recently a semi-derelict terrace of houses. Artist 5 is interested in collecting and collections, and in how objects can become transformed by re-contextualising and juxtaposing them with other objects. Artist 6’s work is a fusion of printmaking, collage and painting that mixes abstraction with the iconic figuration of other cultures.
The Manchester Museum experience: the emergence of 'the team'

In all, there were three museum-based sessions, the final session – the culmination of the work undertaken both in the museum and at school – taking the form of a performance. This was an important event as it showcased the project and also allowed an audience consisting of a few family members and museum staff to see a manifestation of the initiative. It is probably more important, however, to focus on the underpinning processes that informed this.

Before the boys visited the museum there had been quite a flurry of communication between the three artists to develop a research proposal. In brief, what the artists were hoping to achieve was for the young people to engage with their inventive input and to capitalise on the museum artefacts to ‘create a tribe or a community or a society of creative individuals’. In so doing, they wanted the young people to ‘develop an understanding of what it means to be part of a civilisation’ and, through the group experience, to enhance and broaden understandings around ‘citizenship’.

The artists and the boys accessed three collection stores at the museum – palaeontology, arthropods and some of the tools and weapons of the Inuit people, part of the museum’s ‘Living Cultures’ collection. The boys were urged by the artists to ‘use their eyes and open their minds’ in order to consider what happens when ‘we look differently.’ Moreover, they were encouraged to hold ancient bones, rocks and fossils so as to sense energy and other emotions.

There were opportunities made for the boys to laugh but there were also times when they were quiet and in these moments they were prompted ‘to look’. One particular artist guided such looking by highlighting certain elements of the objects. A recurring theme during the visit was the notion of ‘using your eyes so as to open your minds’. The curators, too, answered questions and contributed information. The lead teacher took photographs and engaged with the objects, and occasionally she would quietly and unobtrusively remind the boys to stay focused and to concentrate.

During the first visit Artist 1, who had previously been a volunteer at the museum, took the lead in each of the collection stores. Here, it was evident that she had undertaken more museum-based research than the other artists and she drew on this when she was leading the group and directing attention at particular objects for specific reasons. This was an intensive session, broken halfway by a refreshment break.

The group of artists and students then came together for a meeting, where the young people were prompted to think of themselves as ‘the creative people … we want you to use this project to be creative … what do we call ourselves?’ The notion of ‘the team’ emerged. The boys were set the task to think about the festivals and rituals that ‘the team’ might have.

Artist 2 led the second museum-based session. She had mounted the boys’ sketches and displayed the clay models that had been produced during the previous session. She began by describing and explaining what she was interested in as an artist: ‘looking really carefully … that’s what I do.’ She used Powerpoint to show a selection of her own work, some of which detailed how she uses mirrors to alter the way that she looks at objects. She also introduced specialist pencils and paper, and showed the boys what effects could be achieved by using a pencil in a certain way on the surface of the paper. She then displayed the word ‘team’ and explained that it could mean ‘Totally Everything Always Matters’.

The boys were then given time to work on their drawings. The curator from the arthropod collection had selected an array of creatures from which the boys could choose their subjects. The boys used the pencils and paper, and could use angle-poise lamps to enhance the amount of light on their chosen subjects. As the boys drew Artist 2 circulated amongst them, praising their work, suggesting ideas and offering advice. But she was keen for them to make their own decisions in relation to their work. As she said, ‘It’s your choice.’ On this occasion the Head of Art had accompanied the group and whilst she, too, gave some advice, she assumed a mostly passive role. Again, a refreshment break had been built into the session. The final activity involved giving each boy a long willow stick and a dish of thick black paint. Then each boy, standing on a large sheet of white paper that had been fixed to the museum floor, and using the willow stick, painted an insect.
The Harris Museum and Art Gallery experience: working with ‘things’

Three artists were still involved at this juncture – the one that departed did not leave until after the school party had spent time at the Harris Museum and Gallery. The artists’ proposal and how it was produced should be examined against a background of various constraints:

• the artists, in their efforts to work in conjunction with the lead teacher, were still trying to include aspects of Islamic Civilisation; and were drawing inspiration from Lubaina Himid’s plywood figures to compliment the brief
• the lack of space at the Harris Museum
• the limited number of available objects that related to Islam

Equally, a number of factors dictated that the students would make just one trip to the museum:

• the lack of space
• the limited number of objects
• the cost of transport
• the restrictions of the school timetable. (It is important to note that whilst the Manchester students could visit The Manchester Museum out of school hours, this option was not available to their Blackpool counterparts.)

The major difficulty that confronted the artists however was a shortage of time. Firstly, the period between the artists’ museum-based research meeting and the school visit to the museum was extremely brief, so the collaborating artists had to organise the visit against the clock. Then the practical side of the project also had to be completed within a time frame stipulated by the Alchemy-enquire research team; the artists did not have control of the time frame

The artists themselves made considerable efforts to circumvent these structural difficulties by communicating extensively with each other by email. They also had one further opportunity to meet when they attended a meeting that was formulated as a form of support in relation to CPD.

The lack of time had implications for the project’s other participants, too: the learning coordinator, for example, received the project proposal only two days before the school’s visit to the Harris Museum and was only able to secure a room somewhat smaller than the designated education room which had already been booked out to another school group. Additionally, the learning coordinator was uncertain about what resources were required and, in particular, which objects were to be used. The lead teacher, meanwhile, had undertaken certain preliminary steps prior to the visit. She had prepared the children in terms of the type of objects that they might encounter and had established links between these and Islam. She also ensured that all the students arrived at the museum equipped with a clipboard and pencils for sketching.

Out of a possible sixteen pupils only thirteen attended the museum visit, of which only four were girls. The visit to the Harris Museum was documented by a sole researcher, who combined written notes, as well as film, to capture snapshots of the day.

The museum visit

The artists met the students in the small room and then the party began by simply wandering around the museum. The young people were encouraged to ask questions and reminded to use their clipboards to make notes of things that particularly interested them.

The students were then organised into three groups, which would rotate in a carousel system. One artist worked with the children to draw the outlines of Lubaina Himid’s life-size figures. The second used the gallery exhibits (including the perfume bottle collection) as a resource: the students were given the task of recording and documenting patterns and motifs, and urged to take note of the colours. The third artist worked with the children with the artefacts that had been pre-selected by the museum keeper for the artists on their initial visit. The learning coordinator introduced them; the students examined them wearing the obligatory gloves to handle them; the artist highlighted for the children how objects can be conduits for research into their social history, thereby referring to her own working practice. At lunchtime the children ate in the education room whilst the artists ate in the small room.
Retrospectively the three artists and the learning coordinator identified that if there had been more planning and preparation, the session might have been 'tighter'. Each individual's role, including that of the learning coordinator, might have also clarified. They also discussed how a lack of space had forced deviations from the proposal. For instance, the original plan – to begin the day with the whole group looking at the museum artefacts, with everyone using them in a more interactive and stimulating way – in the event had to be altered because the room was too small, and the objects ended up being incorporated into one of the artist's sessions. Finally, it was noted that it was the lead teacher who was able to make direct links between the museum artefacts and Islamic civilisation when she was working with a group of students. She was also able to remind them of work that they had done at school and, in this way, the students could make tangible connections with previous learning.

**The museum experience: some conclusions**

Observations, when documenting the museum experiences, were guided by the question:

**How can interactions between artists and museum objects create the necessary conditions for learning?**

**The Manchester Museum experience**

The essential structures had been put in place to maximise the potential for the sessions' aims to be realised. A high level of care was apparent from the availability of:

- sufficient space (arranged by the learning coordinator) for the boys to work comfortably
- an array of objects that the staff were prepared for the boys to handle (museum staff having been alerted to the visit in advance)
- refreshments, which were clearly welcomed

As has already been highlighted, the Manchester Museum has space. There were opportunities here to play with a number of boundaries. The boys, for instance, could indulge in purposeful shouting and laughing – practices that will go some way to ensure that they develop positive attitudes towards museums. Focusing on the attitudes of young people aged between fourteen and nineteen to museums, Andrews and Asia (1979) identified among them feelings ranging from being bored, to being rushed through exhibits, to having little or no opportunity for self-discovery. The young people also felt that the staff were patronising. In general, too, it has been noted that museums and art galleries tend to attract visitors who are white, educated and middle class, and that the leisure and educational activities of lower socio-economic groups are less likely to include accessing these institutions. Spending positive time within a museum or gallery, therefore, is contributing towards the boys' cultural capital and entitlement (Bourdieu and Darbel 1991).

It was clear that the artists strove to use the objects to engage the boys' emotions. Through the artefacts, they deliberately tried to invoke feelings of awe and, on occasions, even to summon elements of fear. Effectively they were trying to tap into what Hooper-Greenhill refers to as 'the true learning potential of the museum', where there is '... the opportunity for the imagination and emotions to engage in an enjoyable way with knowledge-related concepts through active learning' (Hooper-Greenhill 1991: 185). Moreover, the experience of handling objects, whether an insect or a smooth bone, as well as the opportunity to use excellent drawing materials, such as those provided by Artist 2, gave the boys aesthetic experiences that stand outside commercialism. As Feeney and Moravcik (1987) lament, '... educators are not encouraging students to develop their aesthetic sense.' (p. 8)

Whilst the basis for this claim may be debatable, it is nevertheless true that educators have been constrained recently within an audit culture, where aesthetics might well have had to take a back seat. Additionally, the opportunity to have hands-on, multi-sensory experiences with the objects not only enhances learning but also increases the memorability of museum-based experiences (Anderson & Lucas 1997; Falk & Dierking 1992). By focusing on the arthropods, palaeontology and 'Living Cultures' collections, the artists provided a context or link that connects with the everyday life experiences of the students. That is, the things that they worked with held a degree of familiarity but the conduit that the artists provided, whilst ordinary, encouraged different perspectives to emerge.

It is evident that the artists strove not only to give the boys a hands-on experience but also to urge them to 'use their eyes'.
Using one’s eyes is a prerequisite of making sense of, or interpreting or decoding phenomena. Thus, for example, when looking at an Inuit weapon, whilst the purpose of the weapon was self-evident, the boys also had to grapple with other nuances that surrounded the object. This included the knowledge that the killing of an animal was undertaken by the Inuit people with levels of reverence; that there was a moral necessity to use all parts of the animal so as to show respect for the kill. It would seem that museums, their objects and an artist can provide a forum for developing thinking: as an instance, where an individual has to grapple with the idea of ‘killing’ that is simultaneously embedded with notions of ‘respect’. Shaikh (cited in Dodd & Sandell 2001: 76) suggests that different and dynamic representations within museums and galleries could work to usurp tendencies to be complacent, arguing that representation must be examined in all its nuances.

This last point leads to a consideration of some of the benefits and constraints of a partnership of artists, as opposed to three artists working as individuals. Clearly a coalition formed by three individuals, because each person will bring his/her own expertise and skills to the project, could add considerably to a project. It means that creative synergy can be developed where Totally Everything Always Matters! However, if there is insufficient time and space, those individuals’ talents may not be extended fully, and their skills and expertise may well be diluted. The example above of the Inuit weapon, for instance, had the potential to juxtapose two notions – ‘killing’ and ‘respect’ – and Marina Rees, who was particularly interested in Inuit culture, could have expanded on this. Among other questions she could have considered ‘how far, and in which dimensions, past interpretations, past understandings, are still being circulated?’ (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 16) and, in so doing, would have been creating a moment where the boys could have further developed their critical thinking. Overall, an Inuit weapon like any visual object, does not have a unified stable meaning; rather an object’s meanings are contingent on the settings in which it has been made and on the relations of significance in which it is placed (Hooper-Greenhill 2000; Belova 2006).

Rather than stipulating or even suggesting that this is what the artist should or should not have done, this is noted to highlight some of the shortcomings of working as a group. As a group, too, it becomes problematic to pursue tangents rigorously or energetically as one individual would inevitably require more access to the overall contact time. The idea of artist as cultural broker remains exciting, however, because it implies potential for the sensitive and appropriate interpretation of collections, as well as the development of refreshing ideas that stimulate and inspire inclusive and targeted education programming which relates directly to the collections.

The Harris Museum and Art Gallery experience
Despite the limitations of physical space and a lack of material relevant to the topic of the brief (as detailed above), the data does suggest that, from the perspective of the young people and, to some extent, from the lead teacher, the experience was quite a positive one.

Of the thirteen pupils only two had been inside a museum before and this was whilst at primary school. Since their involvement in the Alchemy—inquire project the young people themselves have requested an opportunity to return to the museum. Anderson and Piscitelli’s (2002) study of adults’ recollections of childhood visits to museums highlight how about one in seven adults recalled their museum experiences as being boring, lacking engagement and uninteresting, and that furthermore they could not recall ‘doing’ anything (p.27). By contrast, these students were encouraged from the onset to use drawing as a mechanism to ‘remember’ and, importantly, told that such efforts were not going to be judged against a criteria of ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. This is a particularly significant factor for students whose academic experiences of schooling tend towards the negative, such as those who visited the Harris Museum and Gallery. As their teacher remarked, part of their enjoyment of the museum stemmed from the fact that it ‘was out of the ordinary for them’.

It is also evident from the video of the session that the artists took on a mediator’s role, where their own engagement with the objects and artefacts was characterised by enthusiasm and excitement. Good mediation, it seems, is premised on the notion of ‘teach less but share more’ (Cornell 1981; cited in Bowker 2002: 132), a maxim that the artists appear to have incorporated into their practice.

It was possible to see the emergence of some of the artists’ objectives for the research project in the museum setting through
the activities that the young people were engaged with. For instance, the artists, besides wanting the students to use sketching as a way of ‘remembering’, also encouraged them to ‘look at things’. Additionally, it was evident that the artists strove to create situations in which the young people could ‘express their ideas’ and therefore take ‘ownership of the project’ throughout their visit. Moreover, the video footage clearly shows how each artist listened attentively as the students sought to articulate their views. Indeed, it would seem that by providing an opportunity for the pupils to ‘just wonder’, the artists were adopting a style that is conducive to effective learning. As Griffin and Symington’s work (1997) highlighted, more traditional teacher-led groups often adopt classroom-style, task-oriented approaches which do not lead to successful learning. In their work, Griffin and Symington advocate some of the strategies that were apparent in the artists’ practice:

- learner-initiated questioning and enquiry
- informal structures
- adaptability
- the importance of social interaction

This last point is reiterated by the ‘lead’ teacher who said, ‘There was an obvious spark between the pupils and the artists and the relationships were very good throughout.’ Additionally she felt that the activities where the pupils were handling the artefacts did awaken both ‘interest and respect’.

The use of sketchbooks made it possible to explore issues which circulate around ‘abstraction and realism’. The film vividly picks out one girl’s struggle to copy an object ‘faithfully’. Time and again she is seen erasing her efforts proclaiming that what she has done is ‘wrong’. The artist’s response is to encourage the girl to focus on the process of translating the object into a graphic mark, rather than on worrying about the form that is being produced on the page. ‘It doesn’t matter if things look different, it’s your shape now, there are no rights or wrongs’ is both reassuring and encouraging. The film also focuses on a boy who has a very poor self-image and who, at school, finds it hard to concentrate; he is seen in moments of complete absorption as he transcribes object into drawing. The film tracks an intense engagement between the object, his eyes and the object that he is producing on the page. It would seem that this young person, as well as ‘having what could be called a ‘hands-on’ experience, was having what has been described as a ‘minds-on’ on experience, too (Lucas 1983).

The desire of children to produce realistic pictures is something of a problematic issue. It is argued that children are ‘pictorially rewarded’ (Kindler & Darras in Louis 2005: 343) for the ‘recognisability of their graphic productions’ (Louis 2005: 343). Matthews makes the salutary point, however, that children when drawing can suffer from the ‘blinding effect’ of visual realism. There certainly seems to be a sense of this visible in the young girl who is seen constantly rubbing out her efforts. Anning (1997) highlights how, in general, teachers are ‘hesitant’ about intervening or assisting children when they draw. The artists, however, offered the children an alternative method, suggesting that there are no ‘rights’ or ‘wrongs’ in relation to representations of the object. In so doing the artists were breaking with an ingrained habit where a ‘... “good” picture faithfully reflects an absolute reality ....’ (Matthews 2003: 24)

So it would seem that the museum visit was significant in stimulating learning. It was appropriately timed in that it happened at the beginning of the project. As such, the visit acted as a means to motivate and stimulate the young people and, additionally, provided a physical experience that is perhaps in stark contrast to the more sedentary activities undertaken by the young people in ‘ordinary’ schooling.

The lead teacher played a significant role. She had prepared the children and had started to develop links between what they might encounter and Islam. Such preparation, whilst being flagged up in academic texts as being exemplary, also seems to have contributed in terms of group dynamics. As noted above, it was the teacher who took the lead in making links between museum objects and Islamic civilisation; it was also she who was also able to jog their memories about work that had been carried out earlier at school, allowing the students to make connections with previous learning.

Some of the reflections of the artists and the learning coordinator in relation to the day have been noted above: most of these are concerned with a lack of time which impacted on planning and preparation issues. The lead teacher’s comments – ‘I feel more time was needed to set up the project initially especially discussion between artists, museums and the teachers to
ensure everyone understands the aims of the project' and 'I feel the museum could have been involved more after the initial visit' – summarise the feelings and lead to two questions: in what way could the Harris Museum and Art Gallery have offered more involvement? And could it offer forms of support that would not necessarily mean a school visit to the museum?

Observing the artists at work with the young people within the context of the school

The observations that were undertaken in the two schools were guided by the following research question:

What are the possibilities for an artist to assume the role of ‘educator’ and ‘creative facilitator’ within the context of a school?

Obviously, this question is set against the project as a whole, where attention is focused on identifying how the stimuli provided by the museum visits might be both transferred to, and translated within, the context of the school by the artist. The research involved the Manchester High School and the Blackpool High School, while the conclusion synthesises findings from both examples.

The Manchester High School project: the emergence of two rituals

This phase of the project was led by Artist 3, a performance poet and playwright, who also runs laughter workshops. By this stage the boys had had two visits to the museum and some time with Artist 1 making weapons from scrap materials, inspired by the collection of Inuit objects housed in the ‘Living Cultures’ gallery of the Manchester Museum.

The session took place after school hours (3.00 to 5.00 pm). After some preliminary hicups a spacious room was found where it was possible to push back the furniture in order for the boys to move freely. The lead teacher and the researcher, Artist 1 and a PGCE student who had been seconded to the history department on her school were also present, although the lead teacher (after she had secured a room for the group) was forced by other school-related issues to be absent for parts of the session. The following data is drawn from video film of the session.

Artist 3 began the session by addressing the whole group; it was evident from the outset that he wanted the boys to concentrate on feelings: ‘If you know how you feel and what might make you feel that way you can then begin to think about how you might change the way someone else feels...’ The session was guided principally by this philosophy: that is, each individual has the potential to be creative, and such creativity can be used to enact change amongst other individuals.

Before the main body of the session Artist 3 had to familiarise himself with the boys, but he was able to draw on a stockpile of activities in order to make the task of learning names fun. Next, he distributed coloured notebooks, shared between pairs. Then he produced various external stimuli, and asked the children to identify words that captured how each of the pair felt in relation to them. Subsequently he added instruments to the creative melee, where attention was centred on the effects of individual words, rhythms and beat.

Artist 3 then divided the whole group into two in order that each of these subsets could work on a ‘ritual’. This drew from some of the ideas that had already been rehearsed in the whole group, but it also related back to the creative activities evoked by the boys’ previous creative forays into the museum archives and the work that they have undertaken with the other two artists. Artist 3 worked with one group while Artist 1 and the student teacher worked with the other.

The boys’ levels of engagement fluctuated. The video footage denotes rapt and sometimes incredulous faces when Artist 3 ‘performed’: when he was reading one of his own poems or doing card tricks. However, in the film it is also possible on occasion to detect lassitude amongst some of the members and certain individuals slumped and were flopping about in their seats. Similarly, several of the boys’ verbal responses lacked enthusiasm: two of the boys, for instance, produced a list that just featured the word ‘boring’. Moreover, the video also highlights the struggle experienced by Artist 1 and the student trainee when they tried to elicit ideas around the notion of a ‘ritual’. Whilst it is evident that both adults tried to remind the boys about the objects with which they had engaged and how these might relate to a ritual, such efforts were met with a general malaise.
The video also shows the presence of the lead teacher within the group to be quite significant. When she was actively working with one or other of the two subsets the boys’ overall engagement with the development of the ritual increased. Her reprimands, couched in firm yet friendly terms, were effective and made the boys attend to the task. At points she reframed Artist 3’s thinking into more direct guidance.

By the end of the session two rituals had been produced. Neither involved spoken language but drums and other percussion instruments were used to invoke mood and atmosphere.

The Blackpool High School project: the emergence of body-shaped images
According to the project proposal, the aim of the project was:

- to create an installation of body-shaped images, based on the individual pupils taking part in the project, with Islamic-inspired decorations to celebrate each individual’s choice of colour, pattern and shape.

Following the initial museum visit, three morning sessions were held in the classroom of the lead teacher at her Blackpool secondary school. Against the background of the constraints previously mentioned, Artist 5 withdrew from the project before the first classroom session. Not only did she feel that her withdrawal would enable the budget to stretch further for the remaining sessions, more importantly she felt that by withdrawing she would escape the feeling that she was compromising her artistic practice. There were communication problems, with one of the two remaining artists out of the country for the week before the first session and therefore uncertainty as to who would be present at the session until the night before. How the session would be organised was therefore still undecided.

In the event both the two remaining artists decided to be present at all three sessions at the school. The first session was organically organised. Both artists gave the children a short presentation around their own art practice. Then, after this introduction, one artist worked with pairs of students to draw outlines of their bodies onto the plywood boards. The other artist worked from the children’s sketches made at the museum to develop drawings containing pattern and colour.

Over the course of the three sessions the ideas that the children had been developing on paper, as well as in history lessons with their teacher, were transferred into the plywood body outlines. The artists emphasised the process of working with the materials themselves, and not thinking about the final outcome and what it would look like: “We aren’t looking at something and saying “my drawing’s got to look like this.” It’s responding to what is there … we’re playing with the materials we’ve got.” The body outlines were decorated in turn with mixed media: drawing, collage and painting. This led the children to build on their work in layers, each layer having an influence on the next.

The young people were documented as they worked during the three sessions using a combination of written notes and film. As the work progressed, some of the students took an active role in the documentation, using the researcher’s camera. With the lead teacher they also took still photographs during the sessions. These were uploaded by the teacher on to the classroom whiteboard so that the children were able to see themselves at work, while they worked. (The students also watched the films of the museum session and this first session at school in class time with their teacher, during the periods between the project sessions.) It was interesting to note that when the young people took over the filming, they were often told by the students being filmed to stop. Alternatively the subjects turned away or put their hands in front of the camera. Whereas, when the researcher and the project photographer took photos, the students passively accepted the camera, only occasionally glancing at it and continuing with their work, these more demonstrative actions indicated a more equal relationship than that between the students and the researcher, one in which they could object to each other and be more open about being self-conscious in front of the camera. While the young people were filming each other’s work the person behind the camera would occasionally comment on the work that they were filming: for instance, ‘You’ve got some quite good shapes in yours, Amber.’

Glimpses of the children at work and the art pieces as they evolved produce a variety of impressions. As at the Harris Museum, there are moments of complete absorption when the children are either engaged in the act of drawing or painting, or with the collage materials that they are using. The artists introduced hinged mirrors and showed the children how torn-up
pieces of paper were transformed through the double reflections into repeating patterns. This led the children to the idea that they could move the pieces of paper around before actually sticking them down, generating new patterns at the same time. Many of the pupils used the mirrors to experiment and played around with their kaleidoscopic potential, and some of the images they produced were incorporated into their designs.

At the beginning of each session the artists gave a quick introductory talk that detailed aspects of the forthcoming session and also described a number of techniques by which they could execute this: for instance, ‘Today you will need to start working with your lighter colours and then bring in the darker colours.’ At key moments, too, the artists provided clear scaffolding, as a framework to guide the children’s work. For instance, one of the artists picked up a brush and started to paint onto a child’s work, saying, ‘You could go round this edge, picking out the shapes.’

However, moments of disaffection and resistance were also apparent from the observations in the classroom: one child, for instance, said, ‘I don’t like drawing.’ Leading up to the morning breaktime children said ‘I’ve finished’ or ‘I’m bored’; it was noticeable that concentration became poorer. Additionally, there was potential for disorderly behaviour to break out whenever anything had to be collected from coats and bags which had to be left in a cupboard because of the constraints of space. Interestingly, whilst there had been certain negative premonitions around the museum visit, the actual event had passed smoothly and the staff were surprised by the young people’s positive approach. In school, however, instances of misbehaviour and negativity seemed more frequent.

Although each classroom session had been allocated three hours in the original plan, it was clear after the first session that concentration could not be sustained for this length of time in the rather cramped classroom. Consequently, the sessions were shortened, and it should also be noted that when the project activity was undertaken at school, rather than at the museum, school timetable (with its lesson lengths and breaks) prevailed. It is significant, too, the lead teacher being a history teacher and the activity having to fit in with her timetabled class, that what was ostensibly an art activity had to be carried out in a history classroom – all the classroom furniture having to be rearranged and the entire room covered with sheets; and all the cutting of plywood having to be overseen. The time invested by this teacher (her own time) in preparation for each session, and afterwards, storing the plywood boards, was considerable.

Some tentative conclusions arising from both snapshots
A significant feature to emerge from the documentation of the two experiences centres on the contextual differences between museums and schools. Here one question guided the analysis of the documentation:

In what way are schools and museums sufficiently different that they are able to evoke different practices from the young people?

The observation notes relate that within the museum all the young people were experiencing diverse forms of arousal, both their emotional and their intellectual curiosity being engaged. The students could look at and touch the museum objects. Effectively both sets of students were given opportunities for the type of learning that is derived from social constructivism (Gergen 1995; Lave 1988; Lave & Wenger 1991). Within this framework it is maintained that an individual will experience changes in knowledge and understanding as a consequence of exposure to successive experiences, and a subsequent interpretation of these in the light of his/her own prior knowledge and understanding (Piscitelli & Anderson 2001). In both museums there were opportunities for manipulation, silent observation and verbal engagement, There were definite efforts to renegotiate the usual cultural domination of the adult within adult–child verbal engagements: within the museums the artists stressed that there were no ‘right answers’.

Arguably, however, these practices also took place within the schools. The question arises, therefore, as to why certain practices which, in many respects, emulated those undertaken at the museums, appeared to engage the students less fulsomely in the school environment?

The researchers believe that some of the differences originate in issues to do with masculinity, particularly in the ways in which it is performed within the context of schooling (Butler 1999, 2004; Jones & Barron 2007). Here ‘masculinity’ cannot be understood as a ‘singular’ notion but one where variables, such as ethnicity, race, religion and social class, work to produce particular bodily performances. So, whilst there can be ‘fluid’ performances that
go beyond the stereotypical notions of what it means to be male, where there is potential for boys to ‘do’ their masculinity, according to Foucault (1998, 2002), power operates within schools so as to suggest that some male identities are more ‘acceptable’ than others. Such theorising helps to explain why boys, within the context of the museum, are able to talk about their emotional response to an object, or how they can let themselves be completely absorbed in a drawing, while, within school, there might be certain discourses in place where participating in such activities might be beyond the boundaries of what it means to be ‘male’. So, while there was evidence to indicate that there were young men who could move beyond such fixed performances, nevertheless, there were others who seemed reluctant – perhaps even fearful – of ‘letting themselves go’ within the context of school. It was safer for these cases to use the word ‘boring’ than come out with a more poetic alternative. It may also begin to explain why the final performances at The Manchester Museum by the all-male group were devoid of spoken language, relying quite heavily instead on narratives that encapsulated certain hegemonic accounts of masculinity, including ‘the hunter’.

The two contexts also threw into relief certain aspects of the lead teacher’s role. As has been noted, the lead teacher involved with The Manchester Museum adopted a somewhat laissez faire approach as regards the project’s overall content and direction. Indeed, at times she was engaged elsewhere in the school so quite a large proportion of the overall management of the project was left to the individual artists. On occasion this hindered the progress of the project because the artists felt that certain issues (such as disciplining the boys) was beyond their brief: as one of them noted, ‘We are not teachers, we are artists.’

The lead teacher at Blackpool, on the contrary, had quite a clear view about her role:

I helped to facilitate a project to bring pupils, museums and artists together to work. I offered a number of classes and topics for the museum and artists to use. I helped to decide what would be best for the pupils and how they could get the most out of the project. I organised the ‘school side’ of the project ensuring the artists could arrive and start working in contact with the pupils. For example, cutting and painting the figures before the next session, preparing and cleaning up the room. I tried to maximise the amount of contact between the pupils and artist and tried to take more of a shadowing role when they were in school.

Lead teacher of Blackpool High School

It is clear that within the context of this project the Blackpool teacher saw her role as ‘facilitator’. The artists’ role was perceived in slightly different terms. Again the Blackpool teacher offered a variety of insights. She said that the project enabled her to develop a slightly different relationship with the students: ‘It helped me to bond with the group in a way that wasn’t classroom oriented.’ She then elaborated: ‘Teachers have had a very rigorous Programme of Study to follow which has left little time for developing areas of interest.’ She then points out that 2008 marks a certain change; that reforms to the curriculum mean that there is more room for rethinking content and notes, ‘The project has given me ideas to include in the rewrite of the curriculum.’

Finally, there needs to be some consideration of whether the young people themselves could have had a more ‘active’ role in the project. At one point the Manchester Metropolitan research team had suggested that the students might have been instrumental in helping to choose a research proposal. While, for a number of reasons, this idea was not pursued, nevertheless it might be considered further in the future. There appeared to be something potentially powerful in letting the students document themselves whilst in the throes of the project. As previously noted, such a step allows another view, opening up the possibilities for another interpretation and thereby making room for deeper understandings to emerge. It also creates the opportunity for student-produced filmed archives, to be used as a resource in museums for others to access. Given this last set of considerations, it is timely to conclude with the words of one of the young people speaking as a representative of their school group: the project was a ‘great opportunity to reveal ourselves in different medias of art work … we have had a fantastic time with wonderful people.’
Issues relating to continual professional development (CPD) and communication

Communication
The main method that was used for communicating within the research cluster was Basecamp, the online project management site. This site allowed group members to communicate with each other through a message board, and enabled files to be uploaded. At the outset, participants experienced some teething problems as they tried to navigate their way around the site. Additionally, they had to familiarize themselves with the various message threads and the ways that members might be alerted in relation to specific messages. Initially, some project members found themselves being overloaded with messages, some of which were not of direct interest to them. As the project progressed, there were fewer communications, but this meant that because members were less vigilant about checking for them there was a danger of messages being missed. Although it was possible to track all communications, general navigation made this a difficult process. Thus, matters concerning one or two people more often took place through direct communication channels—phone or personal email—rather than via Basecamp.

Basecamp did have a number of strengths. It was, for example, a means of informing all project members simultaneously of forthcoming event times, dates etc. There were also moments when members used the system to share organizational information about the sessions. For instance, the teacher from the Blackpool school used the system to communicate information to the wider cluster group about the planning and timing of the school sessions. It was also useful for the overall administration of the project. Basecamp does seem to have provided a very useful store of information for the researchers and administrators, and, moreover, one which also allowed participants to retrieve historic communications. Interestingly it also served as a conduit for ‘letting off steam’, where participants could vent their frustration when things did not go according to plan. Significantly, it provided a mechanism for one of the artists to explain to all participants why she felt unable to continue working on the Alchemy-enquire project, and the artists were able to share their disquiet about what they perceived as lack of transparency in relation to the budget.

However, as an efficient and open method of communication, Basecamp is flawed, for various reasons;

- participants’ lack of familiarity with the technology – some members felt that training might have been useful
- creation of information overload – not only the pressure that such an overload exerted, but also the fact that many people found it a cumbersome site to use as a result of bulk of information
- participants’ reluctance to use the site (partly in response to feelings of information overload) to discuss and reflect on the sessions themselves because of the extra time that this would have taken

While the artists in particular expressed a desire to share practice, there was a feeling that this was something that should be done face to face and within the timeframe of the project. Generally, there was a feeling that accessing Basecamp and using it to post messages was yet another task that had to be executed outside budgeted timeframes.

Programming continuing professional development
In the ‘Call for Artists’ advertisement, opportunities for CPD were flagged up:

"There will be a funded programme of CPD to support all of the partners (including teachers) for this project. Artists whose projects are not chosen at the proposal stage will be encouraged to maintain their relationship with the project and museums involved by coming to CPD and networking events. Call for Artists 2007"

Notions of continuing professional development come in all kinds of guises but one aspect that the Manchester Metropolitan University was able to observe related to the issue of artists writing a research proposal that was specifically for schools. Accordingly, a description and analysis follows of the formal CPD meeting related to this, before some links are drawn between this and the project as a whole.

First, however, it is necessary to note aspects of another meeting that was held between the three artists who had decided to work in collaboration rather than submitting individual project proposals. It is important to document this meeting because it
captures some of the individual thought processes of each artist and gives an idea of how these individual ideas were then synthesised into a ‘whole’. It was this ‘whole’ that became the basis of a discussion between the three artists and Jo Clements, who represents ‘Artists and Education’, an organisation that links schools, colleges and community groups with artists, providing a range of advice and guidance. It was this meeting that resulted in the three artists working in the Manchester High School.

Jo Clements had a specific brief within the Alchemy—enquire project: to offer each artist professional development in relation to bid-writing in general but, more particularly, addressing the practicalities of developing a proposal in response to the museum, and exploring ways of transferring the artists’ ideas to school teachers effectively. Thus this section documents the preliminary meeting between the artists, before describing the formal CPD meeting between the artists and Jo Clements. Finally a set of reflections is offered which might usefully inform future work.

**A preliminary meeting between three artists**

When observing the three artists the research team’s observations were guided by the following research question:

What kinds of learning can be identified as a consequence of CPD?

Despite a selection procedure being in place, the three artists decided to form a collaborative partnership; as Artist 2 noted, ‘There is something out of kilter with the idea of being creative whilst also being competitive.’

Part of the CPD provision included an opportunity to meet Jo Clements so that the artists could gain specific advice in relation to writing research proposals for schools. In this instance, because the three artists had made the decision to join forces, the need to develop an individual proposal was no longer necessary. Obviously, the school was still expecting a proposal but the whole concept of choosing the ‘best’ or most ‘appropriate’ individual bid was now redundant. The meeting with Jo Clements effectively became an arena in which to clarify what the three were intending to do with the young people, and how each person’s particular skills would be incorporated into the project as a whole. The three artists had had a preliminary planning session before their meeting with Jo; held in a fast-food café close to Jo’s office, it lasted approx. one hour. As well as the artists also present was the researcher who, with the artists’ consent, took notes.

It was apparent that the artists had already been discussing rudimentary ideas by email; they had also managed a three-way conference telephone call, also attended by the Alchemy curator at The Manchester Museum, with more planning being undertaken. The pre-Clement’s briefing crystallised a number of ideas:

- **Artist 2** saw ‘process’ as being ‘more important than outcome’ and she was hoping that the ‘young people could emulate some of the experiences that [I myself undergo] as an artist.’
- **Artist 3** foresaw his practice demanding interactions with small groups while Artists 2 and 1 could see certain benefits in working as a whole group, where there were possibilities for seeing each other at work.
- **Artist 2**’s desire to get individual responses from the young people was so that ‘they could then share with the whole group’.
- **Both Artists 1 and 2** were ‘keen to take on the role of the children as well as the artist’. Artist 3 saw the potential of this idea. As he remarked, ‘... we are the “creatives”. We are free to create whatever we want. We can create the culture of the tribe. We are the “doers”...’
- **Artist 2** was concerned about the notion of ‘tribe’ and wondered whether there were possibilities for developing one that had ‘non-Western connotations.
- **Artist 2** was keen to ‘create a story through the process rather than imposing a story’. Again, Artist 3 stressed that they were the ‘creatives’ and that ‘there were no rules apart from respect ... the consciousness of the tribe will grow ... it is in the now ... it does not have a history.’
- The artists discussed the issue of young people having a ‘voice’: ‘If we say that they can have a voice, we have to let them ... we have to let them guide the project ... but to a point.’
- **Artist 1** also focused on the notion of growth where it was ‘organic’. As she said ... ‘[growth] begins with the individual who brings it to the collective.’
The artists were conscious that they were likely to encounter a tension where, on the one hand, they could see the possibilities for 'an organic unfolding of the project' but on the other they appreciated that the school, as Artist 2 put it, would 'want to know what's being covered'. Artist 2 also expressed a degree of caution in terms of the children's knowledge and that 'they might have limited understanding of what drawing or sculptures or word play is'.

A meeting with Jo Clements
The three artists sketched out verbally to Jo aspects of their proposal. The first point she stressed was that it would be understood as a given that '[the artists] would be taking them [i.e. the young people] on a creative journey.' She pointed out that what they needed was 'a methodology that would link the three of them together' and that 'there was a necessity when writing the proposal to have a thread that connected each of their artistic interests together.' Artist 3 reiterated that the students would be emulating what artists 'do'; effectively the project would be helping each student to 'find their inner artist' where 'process would be more important than outcome.' Artist 3 then explained the idea of the 'tribe' to Jo. She was positive about this and made the point that as a concept 'tribe' would help to 'frame' the project.

Jo stressed that writing a research proposal for school was different to writing one for, say, the Arts Council because schools were 'looking for specific things'. Furthermore, she also advised them to be wary of 'abstract' notions saying, 'be specific about what you are offering - make it explicit about what you are going to do with the young people and why you are doing it.' She also advised three to err towards the positive when writing: rather than putting 'may include', for example, this should be supplanted by 'will include'. She also advised developing a 'tight' project, one that did not attempt to 'spread itself too thinly'. Her final thoughts evolved around sustainability and continuity, so that 'whatever you do with the students, make sure it can be carried on and that there is progression from one week's session to the next.' In terms of pedagogic style she stressed 'group work'.

Some conclusions on writing proposals
Effectively what we are witnessing in the above two scenarios are three people and a facilitator who, together, are developing their own 'community of practice'. The term 'community of practice' was created by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) as 'a means of exploring the notion of situated learning within a particular domain of social practice' (Mavers et al 2005: 180). So what kinds of learning are occurring within the two scenarios? Put a little differently, what forms of professional development have taken place? First we can see how, as a consequence of interactions between the three participants, the thinking in relation to the joint research proposal is constructed and transformed. So, by working together, and by talking through their ideas, each member of the community reveals aspects of their own belief systems. Having 'revealed' them to the community, there are then possibilities for these to be altered or fashioned slightly differently. Thus, in the above scenario we can see how Artist 3 is fired up by the idea of creating a 'tribe', and Artist 2, whilst accepting this as an idea, nevertheless wants to assess whether it can be constructed a little differently from Western notions of 'a tribe'. The concept of 'distributed cognition' can be applied to the interaction between these two artists. As Mavers et al infer, 'What can be understood and achieved by a group of learners working together can often be more than any one learner could understand and achieve alone.' (2005: 181). By working together 'something' is being learned which otherwise might not have been.

Jo Clements's advice to the three artists stemmed from her intimate knowledge of how schools function, particularly in relation to programme-planning. Additionally, she was able to counsel them about writing proposals. This went beyond what might be described as 'common sense'. She could, for instance, flag up the importance of developing a methodology that conceptualised a vehicle by which the idea of 'the tribe' could be materialised. Similarly, she had a handle on the kinds of language with which schools are familiar and to which they respond favourably; she could indicate, therefore, where positive language should be used.

It is evident that Jo was giving generic advice when she talked to the group – most useful for those with less experience, but particularly timely and appropriate for one of the artists, whose first written proposal for a school this was. Arguably, for those with more experience, the session covered already familiar territory. There were opportunities, however, for the artists to access CPD support on an individual basis.
The artists themselves would have welcomed further opportunities for CPD: more opportunities to research within the context of the museum’s activities, in particular. They also suggested that they would have liked to have been able to see each other’s practice. In response to this, an opportunity was provided to do so – after the completion of the project work.

Building on the model of community of practice
Discussion of the CPD session with Jo Clements has identified grounds for developing a method of working that would engender a ‘community of practice’, on which further projects could be based. What was productive about the proposal meeting was the way the artists verbalised what lay behind their different approaches, a process that was further provoked by the presence of a facilitator, who asked critical questions. Effectively, this dialogue began to tease out verbally the theories and practices on which the artists were building the activities for the sessions. It would seem that the proposal itself had the potential to act as a mechanism by which collaborators could engage critically with the aims of the project and examine more deeply how such aims might be translated. Such a discussion allows differences to surface and the transformation of the object to take place – the proposal to emerge – as a result. In this way, the proposal can potentially lie at the heart of the community of practice, both as an object with which participants can critically engage in order to feed something back into the project’s evolution, and for participants to acquire an understanding of each other’s different positions and approaches.

Initially, in this current phase of the Alchemy–enquire project, the artist’s proposal was conceived of as representing the aims and objectives of the individual projects. In order for schools to choose the proposal that best suited them, however, the proposals had to be judged on their relative merits, and thus the main strand of formal CPD offered to the artists was assistance in formulating what would be a successful bid.

If, however, this initial dialogue could be seen as a conversation, which might then continue for the duration of the project, then a wider community of practice could be created. In this way, although the artist might shape the initial proposal, it would then serve as a mechanism through which the other project collaborators could become critically engaged, and the proposal be translated into practice. Envisioned as such, the proposal becomes a site where participants can bring to bear their different practice, experiences and institutional contexts. In this way a more experimental methodology can be created: the proposal, rather than being fixed at the beginning of the project, plays a more fluid, but pivotal part in the ongoing development of the project. Although it is driven by the artists’ vision, the proposal becomes a starting point from which the collaborators can shape the project jointly as it unfolds during the sessions.

In the light of the above observations, the researchers believe that the project should be seen in terms of the possibilities that it provides for future work of this kind. It marks the tentative beginnings of a community of practice. There are tangible ways in which that practice can be allowed both to evolve and to take off in new ways. In this sense it might be useful for those who have participated to think of themselves as a nascent creative tribe, in the same way that the young people who came to The Manchester Museum were encouraged to see themselves.

The proposal itself could be used to frame the project for both ‘pre-view’ and ‘re-view’ meetings; where teachers, curators and museum educators could continue to shape the proposal as the project evolved. Thinking retrospectively, in the light of the recordings made by the young people themselves, these reflections might be augmented by recordings. Such documentation could provide a backdrop through which participants could continually review the proposal.

This documentation could also be used to capture the ‘unexpected’: during the current project, for instance, while one of the researchers was filming, there were occasions when pupils made responses that were difficult to accommodate within the framework of the planned session. In one case, when looking at the armoury in the Living Cultures collection, a boy referred to his own sword collection at home. Such a moment could have been perceived as a ‘critical incident’. It could have become the starting point for the ‘community’ to consider ways in which the boy’s collection could have been used in juxtaposition to the museum’s collection, allowing the community to reconsider both in new ways. In another case, a boy who was supposed to be drawing had chosen instead to build a tower using pencils. When told to ‘stop playing with them and to get on with the task of drawing’, he replied that it was ‘art’. Again, whilst in some senses the boy’s actions and words were
subversive, this exchange could have created a space for the ‘community of practice’ to consider the question ‘what is art?’ and more specifically ‘what is art in relation to the young people?’

If the sessions had been approached in this experimental way, a method might have emerged that could have discussed some of the difficult issues that arose around the Harris museum project. The subject of the learning brief (Islam) was certainly challenging, especially given the limited nature of relevant material in the museum’s collections. However, it is possible that had the proposal itself become an object of reflection for all the participants before the first visit to the school, a richer conversation might have emerged. Such a conversation might have been able to destabilise some of the assumptions about Islam currently in circulation and ‘taken for granted’, and, as a consequence, new considerations might have been provoked.

**Summary of findings**

**Artist as educator and creative facilitator**

The Alchemy-enquire initiative provided an opportunity for artists to work with young people – both as educators and as creative facilitators. The data indicates how, in each instance, the artists’ pedagogical style placed an emphasis on the young people being co-learners, and tried to avoid an adult–child relationship in which the adult is the ‘knower’ and the child is the passive recipient.

**Open access**

The artists and curators provided a conduit between the students and the museum, and, in so doing, breached some of the barriers that prevent certain sectors of society from accessing such institutions. Nevertheless there are certain structural issues that need to be considered, such as space.

It is evident that the physical limitations of one building led to tension and actually impeded some activities; with more space there could have been more interactive teaching and more museum-based learning sessions.

The size of a building also impacts upon what can and cannot be housed in terms of museum collections. This in turn influences a museum’s capacity to respond to, and address, the specific needs of local schools. Such situations are not irremediable but they do necessitate developing forums where such issues can be addressed.

**Positive experiences**

All the young people who participated regarded accessing the museums and galleries as a positive experience. Various factors contributed to this:

- opportunities to browse and wander in an environment that was relaxed and not overtly rule-bound
- creation of opportunities for the young people to pursue aspects of their personal agenda, and thus give them some empowerment over their own learning
- sensitivity on the part of museum staff and the artists, so that the students were not rushed but allowed to take their time when looking and handling objects
- provision of diverse experiences that incorporated active participation – and favoured learning in kinaesthetic and tactile modalities

**Diverse experiences**

The Alchemy-enquire initiative has demonstrated that museums and galleries have the capacity to enable and support diverse practices and opportunities for a range of cultural experiences. Within the scope of the project young people were able to devise and execute a physical performance and accomplish drawings and artwork. All these activities drew from, and capitalised upon, museum collections where there was an embedded obligation to offer interpretations. The ability to interpret is, in the opinion of the research team, the first step in offering critique.

**Communities of practice**

The Alchemy-enquire project provided a forum in which ‘communities of practice’ could evolve. A community of practice is constituted by a group of learners who, by working together, can often achieve more than any one learner could understand and achieve alone. The artists, by forming coalitions and partnerships, effectively emulated many of the characteristics that can be found within communities of practice.

However, for a community of practice to fulfil its potential in a project such as this, it is necessary for schools in general, but
particularly the lead teacher, to become an active member. Similarly, whilst the curators introduced the artists and the young people to a number of collections, their role, as understood within the programme, was limited. The process by which participants become members and the roles that they then assume within the community is dependent on a number of variables, ‘time’, perhaps, being the most significant.

Thus, whilst there is clear evidence to suggest that the Alchemy-enquire project provides scope for developing communities of practice, the timeframe within which it had to be executed mitigated against maximising their full potential: there was insufficient time allowed for both preliminary planning and ongoing review and reflection. These activities – together with others, such as open dialogue – are pivotal to the overall healthy and organic development of the project.

References


SOUTH EAST CLUSTER RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by Fabrica, the Towner Museum and Art Gallery and the De La Warr Pavilion in collaboration with the Centre for Continuing Education at the Sussex Institute, University of Sussex, and partner artists and teachers.

Final report by Maeve O'Brien, CCE, University of Sussex, in collaboration with Richard Beales (Towner Museum and Art Gallery), Polly Gifford (De La Warr Pavilion), Saj Fareed (Fabrica and artist), Susan Diab (artist), Ella Burns (artist), Adrian Peachment, (teacher) Jane Lyster (artist), Catherine McConnell (teacher) and Deborah Barker (cluster coordinator).


Introduction

This research report discusses the use of action learning as a tool in the development of a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme for the contemporary gallery education sector. It documents the experience of those professionals involved in phase 1 of "enquire" (2005) who volunteered to discuss their work from a professional and personal perspective.

Aims

The aims of this research are:

- to evaluate the action learning set experience of the South East cluster and
- to test the action learning method as a tool that can be used when developing a CPD programme for the gallery education sector

The following objectives were set for the evaluation framework:

- to find out what in the action learning process/method worked well/less well for participating individuals
- to summarise general themes emerging from the set that are relevant to all the professional groups involved in the delivery of gallery education
- to capture key themes that will inform the content and delivery of a CPD gallery education course for the South East gallery sector

Research participants

During "enquire" phase 2.1, the South East cluster has carried on its partnership with the University of Sussex, in order to build upon the peer network established through phase 1 of the programme. The development of a gallery education CPD programme is viewed by the University of Sussex as a logical extension of its partnership with the regional enquire galleries and engage. It offers the University the opportunity to bring to the fore its particular expertise in teaching and learning, blending, as it does, the work of academic departments (Centre for Continuing Education, School of Education) with work-based learning development.

The gallery partners leading the activity are:

- De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill: a centre for contemporary arts with a range of activities that provided an opportunity to explore the relations between art forms
- Fabrica, Brighton: a commissioning gallery promoting access to contemporary practice
- Towner Museum and Art Gallery, Eastbourne: run by the local authority, the Towner is the only participating gallery with a permanent collection

Action learning was selected by the cluster as a frame for investigating the process of relationship-building between artist, teacher and gallery educator in the gallery environment.

To this end, participants in the action learning set included:

- members of staff from each of the three galleries (De La Warr Pavilion, Fabrica, Towner Art Gallery)
- an artist invited by each of the three galleries
- a teacher or youth worker invited by each of the galleries
- an academic from the Centre for Continuing Education (University of Sussex)

The action learning set brought together three artists, two teachers, three gallery educators, a youth worker and an academic to participate in six sessions of action learning over a six-month period.

Project timescale

The action learning sets took place during the evening (5.00–8.00 pm) on:

- Monday 13 November 2006: Towner Museum & Art Gallery
- Monday 18 December 2006: Fabrica
- Monday 15 January 2007: De La Warr Pavilion
- Monday 12 February 2007: Towner Museum & Art Gallery
- Monday 12 March 2007: De La Warr Pavilion
- Monday 16 April 2007: Fabrica

An additional set meeting was organised for Monday 16 June 2007 at the University of Sussex.
The first three sessions were guided by a consultant from Bridge Builders, who introduced participants to the principles and processes of action learning sets to provide guidance on getting started. Subsequently, the set became self-managing. During the facilitated phase participants explicitly agreed that they preferred to explore the action learning set method without a predetermined ‘agenda’ in order to accommodate contrasting approaches to learning and project development. As the report will show, working ‘without an agenda’ was viewed by all as both challenging and liberating. In informing course design, it has been a constant reminder that flexibility and adaptability are central to meeting the needs of adult learners and work-based learning environments.

Methodology

The primary roles of the action learning set were further to develop a peer network and to investigate the nature of professional learning in the gallery environment.

Maeve O'Brien (Centre for Continuing Education, University of Sussex) led the research process with two outcomes in mind:

- to use the forum to inform the nature and content of a proposed Artist Educator course at University of Sussex
- to explore the dynamic of the artist-teacher-educator relationship

Emily Pringle’s recent review of published material on gallery education, *Learning in the Gallery: context, process, outcomes* (2006) suggests that there is no published material documenting a learning set that focuses on the dynamic of the artist-teacher-educator relationship.

To achieve these outcomes the following objectives were set for an evaluation framework:

- to find out what worked well/less well in the action learning process/method for participating individuals
- to summarise general themes emerging from the set that are relevant to all professional groups involved in the delivery of gallery education
- to capture key themes that will inform the content and delivery of a CPD gallery education course for the South East gallery sector

Because it aims to assess the participants’ engagement and interaction with the method of the action learning experience, the evaluation relies on qualitative feedback from them for its substance. The views of individuals outside the set have not been sought at this time.

The research has been undertaken by one of the participants in the action learning set and therefore has been heavily influenced by the experience itself. This ensures that the cornerstone of the CPD programme is the knowledge base of the existing South East cluster galleries and the peers with whom they have worked over the research period.

Action research techniques were employed: the set was observed, loosely recorded and the results reflected back to the participants as a means of informing both the research and the CPD course development that was progressing alongside the set. The research tools employed include:

- participant observation
- a group discussion session during the final set meeting
- individual feedback on two simple questions after the final set meeting
- literature review
- the voluntary use of a personal learning log / research diary

The research process remained in the background during the set meetings. The data for this report, therefore, was provided by the summative feedback loop. Sessions were not recorded and the researcher’s observations were confined to a personal log of their own experience and their perception of the experiences of the other set members.

The option to use the South East enquire hub as a discussion forum to pick up topics raised in the set meetings was not clearly developed at the start of the project. Initially, therefore, access to the hub was limited, with the result that it appeared to be used by an inner core (galleries/higher education institute (HEI) and an outer core artists/teachers) for different purposes.

The literature review focused on texts immediately relevant to action learning and extended laterally to those examining continuing professional development through group learning and
reflective practice. It has considered theories of social network analysis and organisational design. Furthermore, earlier research undertaken during phase 1 of enquire and by the National Federation for Educational Research (NFER) for CAPE UK was interrogated for instances of convergence and divergence in emergent critical issues.

The use of action research diaries or personal learning logs was encouraged but not made mandatory and these have therefore not been included in this research.

Research ethics

The principal researcher, Maeve O’Brien, is a faculty member of the Centre for Continuing Education, a department of the Sussex Institute (SI) at the University of Sussex. Her subject area is arts and cultural management and she is developing a body of research on partnership working in the arts and cultural sector.

The Sussex Institute (University of Sussex) works in four broad areas of applied social research – law, social work and social care, adult learning and child learning – in which high standards of research ethics are essential and challenging. The SI governance committee has produced standards and guidelines so that staff and research students can take responsibility for checking their own research activities and consider further implications of their work. These standards and guidelines also apply to people involved in research being conducted under the auspices of the university, including collaborators and volunteers.

The key standards identified are:

- to safeguard the interests and rights of those involved or affected by the research
- to ensure legislative requirements on human rights and data protection have been met
- to establish informed consent even when this is difficult
- to develop in research practices the highest possible standards – in research design, data collection, storage, analysis, interpretation and reporting
- to consider the consequences of the work, or its misuse, for those involved in the study and other interested parties
- to ensure that, where relevant, approval is granted by an appropriate external professional ethical committee

These standards are applicable wherever research is undertaken. The standards and guidelines are supported through staff development activities. Some aspects of the guidelines are general across all research in SI, for example, establishing informed consent; other aspects are relevant to some research across all parts of SI, for example, involving children in research; and other aspects may only apply to one study, for example, interviewing vulnerable people.

Background

From action research to action learning

A key finding of phase 1 of enquire (2004–6) was the degree of impact that the relationship between the professionals involved in delivering gallery education has on the experiences of young people. The results from the clusters of action research point to an improvement in quality, innovation, efficiency and successful delivery as the partnership between professionals developed into a sound working relationship. This was evidenced at a variety of levels: between members of the research team (academics, gallery educators, teachers, artists); and between members of the project teams (artists, teachers, gallery educators); and also noted by the young people who participated in the projects. Fundamental to these relationships, at all levels, was a willingness to learn.

In enquire the distinction between those delivering and those learning or benefiting has been difficult to make and this is one of its real strengths – and probably underestimated at its inception. Through investigating learning amongst young people a considerable amount of formal and non-formal learning has taken place to the benefit of the gallery educators, researchers, artists and teachers.

(Taylor 2006)

The South East cluster was particularly interested in this finding because it made explicit the added value inherent in an approach to gallery education common to the gallery partners. Their engagement with enquire has always been motivated by a desire to facilitate closer working relationships between the three galleries (De La Warr Pavilion, Fabrica, Towner), relationships that
could accommodate the sharing of good professional practice and facilitate resource and project development. Furthermore, all the galleries share a commitment to involving and nurturing partnerships with the broad spectrum of professionals who deliver gallery education activity. It was thus not surprising that by the end of phase 1 of *enquire* the South East cluster had identified 'the significance of group learning and collaborative working' as a key theme to be taken forward for future research and development of activity.

The success of *enquire* phase 1 gave this legitimacy and opened up the possibility for carrying out further research in this area. In particular, it has afforded the South East cluster the opportunity to explore these relationships in the dynamic forum of the action learning set, a method of meeting that enables open exchange by abolishing agendas and formulaic topics of discussion. Action learning, which will be discussed in more detail later, was being road-tested for the purpose of informing the development of a continuing professional development (CPD) programme for the South East gallery education sector, a key question being:

In what way can action learning facilitate the continuing professional development of professionals working in the gallery education sector?

This question poses a field of enquiry in which to investigate the learning of professionals and through this investigation gain insight into the complexity of partnership working in arts and cultural work. The gallery education partnership, that of artist, teacher and gallery educator, is not dissimilar to patterns emerging in other fields of arts practice. There is growing recognition and acceptance that much of the contemporary arts operate in a complex ecology (Holden 2007) that draws together different professionals in a variety of contexts and settings within and outside the traditional arts sector. Arising from this is a corresponding need better to understand how these groups work together; what motivates individuals and organisations to participate; and the conditions that support, as well as block, development.

The complexity of work in the arts field is aptly described by Summerton and Kay in their paper *Hidden from View: The Shape of Arts Work and Arts Organisations in the UK* (AIMAC 1999) where they point out ‘[p]atterns of work are usually fluid, changing in response to personal priorities or external opportunities’ and go on to contrast this with more traditional work patterns and the ‘old-fashioned grid of concepts relating to employment, unemployment and self-employment’. If placed along a continuum of ‘engagement’ by employment status alone, a typical gallery education partnership could look like this:

| participant (volunteer) | artist (freelance) | gallery educator (part-time) | teacher (full-time) |

Given the diversity of this engagement model, how do gallery education relationships develop? How do strong partnerships evolve, given the freelance nature of so much arts work, the resource constraints, time constraints, not to mention the very different cultures of work that the professionals inhabit? In the not-uncommon absence of long lead-ins for project work, how do you ensure that everyone can participate on an equal basis, and what is it reasonable to expect from individuals?

And to what do individuals have access, by way of education and training, both formative and then cumulative, as continuing professional development, to prepare them for taking part in gallery education projects?

Whilst this report does not claim definitively to answer those questions, it does highlight where the use of the action learning set was a useful tool in identifying areas of consensus as well as contention; for helping professionals to see how the ‘culture’ of the workplace influences their work practices and, through reflection through listening, how they might learn from the methods and values of other professions.

**Action learning: the theoretical context**

Within *enquire*, action learning has been used in an exploratory way by the South East cluster with the express aim of seeing what, if any, information, insights and techniques could be drawn directly from the experience into a CPD programme of learning for professionals involved in the delivery of gallery education.

The use of action learning as a tool for developing people and organisations has been growing steadily since the 1980s when it was highlighted as an effective method for fostering and developing what can loosely be termed the ‘learning’
organisation. The learning organisation regards ‘people’ as the most valuable asset and therefore focuses development on creating conditions for individuals, working alone or in groups, to question norms and test new ways of operating to gain advantage in competitive market environments or complex systems of service delivery (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997).

Action learning has been used in large private sector companies, such as W H Smith, Motorola, BUPA and Seagrams (Weinstein 1995), as well as in the public sector (local authorities, the NHS) where, with Reg Revans’s pioneering work with the British Coal Board, it originated in the 1940s and 1950s (1). ‘Action Learning is an educational idea or philosophy, aimed at healing the split that Revans saw as having developed historically between thinking and doing, between ideas and action.’ (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997: 191) Pedler’s description of action learning as a ‘philosophy’ is useful because it allows for the breadth of interpretations and applications that can be found today.

As a guiding principle, action learning has been defined as: ‘a “process” underpinned by a belief in individual potential: a way of learning from our actions (and from what happens to us and around us) by taking time to question and reflect on this in order to gain insights and consider how to act in the future.’ (Krystina Weinstein 1995: 9)

Taking part in an action learning set provides the time and the space to attend to the relationship, i.e. the link, between reflection and learning. Set members enable their colleagues to understand, explore and judge their situation as well as helping them realize underlying feelings that influence behaviour. The action learning process is supportive and challenging, while recognizing the subjective world of set members and the social context of their work and lives. (McGill & Brockbank 2004: 13)

And to return to the original work of Revans (1978, 1983, 1998), ‘There is no learning without action and no (sober and deliberate) action without learning.’ Revans was concerned that a reliance on what he called ‘programmed knowledge’, or that which was taught by ‘experts’ using established practices and techniques, was insufficient to deal with many of the challenges facing a society in a rapid period of change, as was the case in postwar Britain. Revans called for the addition of ‘questioning insight’ if individuals, and by extension the organisations they worked for, were to be able to adapt their processes to the specific challenges they faced; challenges which Revans regarded as context-specific and in need of the localised solutions that individuals working in a company could better provide than external experts (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997).

\[ \text{Learning} = P + Q \]
\[ P = \text{programmed knowledge (specialism, technical expertise)} \]
\[ Q = \text{questioning insight (leading change through asking questions)} \]

Adapted from Reg Revans (1998) The ABC of Action Learning, Lemos & Crane (p.29)

**Action learning as method**

As a method of learning, action learning relies on peer communication. It is a powerful tool for continuing professional development because it recognises the contribution of each individual on an equal basis as part of constructing learned ‘knowledge’. It sits within co-constructivist theories of learning and is closely allied to Schon’s theory of reflective practice and Wenger’s communities of practice.

Embedded within the action learning method is a commitment to viewing the learners as rich components of the learning process rather than as empty vessels that need to be filled with specific knowledge (McGill & Brockbank 2004). The approach is collaborative, pro-active and context-specific, requiring participants to be active in their own learning and in the learning of their peers. Revans described the action learning set as ‘the crucible of action’ (1998: 21) because its function is to be a site for reflection, intellectual debate, visioning and revising. Action learning is suitable for any situation where there is a problem to address rather than a puzzle to be solved.

Action learning is to make useful progress on the treatment of problems/opportunities, where no solution can possibly exist already because different managers, all honest, experienced and wise, will advocate different courses of action in
accordance with their different value systems, their different past experiences and their different hopes for the future. (Revans 1998: 28)

The action learning set
In its most basic form the process involves a group of individuals who share a common purpose coming together on a voluntary basis for regular meetings, usually at intervals (e.g. one half-day once per month) over a fixed period of time. During a ‘set’ individuals volunteer to ‘present’ (also known as taking ‘clean space’) a topic of their choosing: for ten to twenty minutes this individual can talk (or not) without interruption while the other set members are obliged to listen. Only when the presenter is finished may the others ask questions, doing their best to express neither approval nor disapproval because the aim is to help the presenter find new ways of seeing the topic. This type of dialogue is characteristic of ‘connected’ knowing and acts in parallel to a more traditional form of knowledge transfer: ‘separate’ knowing. Separate knowing is didactic and one-directional whereas ‘connected’ knowing relies on relationship and rapport as a frame for learning (McGill & Brockbank 2004).

While the practice of ‘presenting’ or ‘clean space’ remains fixed, the objectives of an action learning set can be highly formalised or very loose. It is for the set members to decide on boundaries and objectives. Within this frame, set members then use the insight and knowledge they have gained from the meeting in their working or personal life. For example, the set could function as a progressive journey for an individual through a problem, or it could act as a touchstone for a group navigating change or fostering a development in the workplace. If the purpose of the action learning set is to draw on the experience of individuals to inform future action, as a tool of continuing professional development, its power lies in its ability to render all participants equal, so that no one ‘professional’ comes to instruct or direct but instead all come to learn.

Working with the enquire programme, this method offered to the professionals participating in the action learning set a contextual frame through which to look back on the initiation and active engagement of the partnership driving the research process of phase 1 as well as forward, to an expanding and strengthening partnership working through the CPD programme being developed in phase 2.1.

Role identity and the sociology of organisation
Professionals develop working relationships that tend to conform to a monoculture idea of how a profession 'behaves'. Adaptive normative behaviour, the principle of metacontrast, finds representation in a group prototype that will define beliefs, behaviours, feelings and values (Hogg, Terry, White 2000; Ryan & Decli 2000; Day & Hadfield 2004). Individuals who identify with a group do not do so because they are told to but rather because humans desire connections and operate well when sited in the dual position of a 'social group' in a 'social field', as identified by the sociologist Kurt Lewin (Scott 1991). What is most important to the group in this construct is the perceived environment it has established and it is that which informs their definition of the field of operation.

Through the study of relationships and processes social network analysis offers a variety of pathways for understanding how people operate in groups (Scott 1991). As individuals come together to produce something or to carry out specific tasks they create forms of organisation that are adaptive to the field of activity, and set boundaries that act in concert to establish 'institutional' norms (Peterson 2000; Anand 2000; DiMaggio 1991). In the field of gallery education the diversity of roles and cultures can bring benefits as well as problems, as Sekules (2003) observes:

... the museum, the artist, the school, the school teacher, have definable roles which have developed within distinct cultures, and many of the problems of bad communication or poor work which have emerged in past practice have arisen as a result of lack of understanding of the extent to which differences in culture have affected the nature of the work undertaken. Conversely, where cultural issues are confronted head on; where the role of each professional person involved is closely defined, there is more likelihood that each professional contribution will be able to thrive. (Sekules 2003)

The action learning set was used to explore, and identify, the drivers of network development and to note changes, if any should occur, in how the professionals communicate. One recurring theme throughout enquire has been the perceived differences inherent in the working 'cultures' of the professionals responsible for the delivery of gallery education. Rightly or
wrongly, as a review of the phase 1 *enquire* cluster reports show, the artist is often cast in a ‘role’ that dictates and/or incubates certain behavioural norms: free-thinking, rebellious, anti-establishment, chaotic, as opposed to methodical, risk-taking as opposed to risk-averse. In stark contrast the teacher is commonly portrayed as disciplinarian, conformist, insular and narrowly focused. When the development of partnership working is considered there is an up- and a downside to this kind of stereotyping. On the upside, such extremes, when brought into contact sensitively, can challenge group thinking and constructively open up dialogue. Conversely, the reversion to ‘type’ or ‘role’ can put undue pressure on an individual to ‘perform’ in certain ways that demean their personal input and place narrow boundaries on what they are expected, or willing, in a professional capacity, to be involved in.

The individual’s identification with a group prototype will nuance their response to perceived traits and negatively or positively affect their own intrinsic motivation when faced with a task (Ryan & Deci 2000). If ‘in-group’ identification is too strong, the potential for incursions (influences) from outside become less possible. The impact that this may have on an individual’s capacity to learn is highlighted by Eraut (2000), who observes that ‘the episodic memories of individuals are influenced both by the semi-conscious socialisation process through which norms, values, perspectives and interpretations of events are shaped by the local workplace culture, and by their conscious learning from others, and with others, as they engage in co-operative work and tackle challenging tasks.’

The gallery, as seen by the pioneering curator John Cotton Dana as a ‘simple, accessible, interactive and interpretative space’ (Anand 2000), offers what Sekules calls ‘...a locus for education which has both formal and informal elements’. She continues, the museum (sic art gallery) has the capacity to bridge the cultures of artist and school in a way which takes the spotlight away from the dominance of their differences, providing an environment and range of expertise which may complement the professional teaching of artist and school teacher. It can become a territory for educational exchange and experiment where questioning and personal development is the norm. (Sekules 2003)

Creativity and innovation are more often the result of a subtle re-interpretation of an existing idea than an entirely novel or unique approach (Bilton 2006); in this way the ‘other’ perception of a problem or situation, if it is brought to light in a supportive and safe environment, can be of great value. As early as 1990 researchers investigating artists working in schools recognised that, as well as mapping specific outcomes for target groups, a project should consider what artists and teachers might gain from the experience of working together (Sharp & Dust 1990). Sekules’s call for each institution “to recognis[e] the cultural specificity and difference of the other” (2003: 147) can be realised through the gallery education project if reflection on the partnership is built into the evaluative framework as a specific CPD outcome, as was the case in *enquire*.

**Developing strong partnerships through CPD**

Research carried out by Doherty and Harland (2001) for CAPE UK provides a useful typology of partnership on which to focus formal learning. During their evaluation of a gallery education initiative they identified three types of partnership:

- **the extensive partnership** that builds on previous relationships and is characterised by stability and a high degree of commitment, fluid decision-making and democratic at all levels of activity
- **the developing partnership** where activity is located in discrete projects led by specific individuals, projects that expand and contract based on resources and their ability to engender support and commitment
- **the constrained partnership** which, because of internal difficulty dealing with the demands of an initiative, offers few possibilities to extend activity beyond one-off projects

Combining this typology with the staged model of partnership development outlined by Pedler, Burgoyne and Boydell (2004) a ‘project’ offers a vehicle for learning that can accommodate both individual and group processes. By working through the stages of separation, exploration and finally co-creation (p.191) individuals can foster what O’Brien terms ‘inter-professional empathy’, or the ability to see beyond their own professional context to envision work practices suitable to complex partnerships.
Action learning embedded in a CPD programme may provide an additional layer of specification, ensuring that the practice-based learning suits the needs of a particular group and the context in which they work. However, as a point of caution, McGill and Brockbank (2004: 176–7) point out that this type of empathy must not be confused with sympathy, which is more akin to ‘feeling with’ the other and assumes, agreement, or at least an unwillingness to question behaviours and attitudes. Effective partnership working must include an active element that enables the individual to ‘inhabit’, mentally and emotionally, the context of the other. Transgressing professional boundaries can catalyse trust relationships across delivery partners amongst school, education authority and higher education partnerships, as identified in research carried out by Day and Hadfield (2004).

If the partnership is to be successful, trust is essential. It is important in network learning because, if a network is to achieve success, its members will need to be willing to take risks (i.e. risk vulnerability), rely upon each other to gain in self-efficacy (a sense of increased competence), exercise honesty and openness, and be emotionally confident in their relationships with each other. These components of network learning apply equally to relationships between organisations, which support network learning and they suggest sustained attention by leaders in the building of collective intra- and inter-organisational trust. Trust is the glue that holds partnerships together. There is a sense, then, in which successful networks embody the three primary ingredients of democracy: i) social trust, ii) norms of reciprocity and iii) networks of civic engagement.

(Putnam 1993: 180)

To question the behaviours and attitudes of another person requires trust on both sides. Returning to the research of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), this trust is ‘necessary for effective cooperation’ and sets the ‘foundations for cohesive and productive relationships’. Within the context of contemporary gallery education (Pringle 2006) the partnership should also feel comfortable with an active and circumstantial approach to its own learning, one that mirrors the questioning stance of the gallery education experience being devised for participants. Working through the vehicle of an action learning set without a defined agenda required participants to step out from behind their individual professional personae and engage on a more social and personal level – in much the same way as they encourage people to participate in the gallery education activities that they themselves devise.

**CPD and professional learning**

‘It is not a question of assimilation, but of collaborative development.’

(Sekules 2003: 139)

Professional learning operates on a broad spectrum that includes individual and group actions, formal and non-formal contexts, active and reflective paradigms. It is often stimulated by the need to ‘transfer knowledge’ and expertise across boundaries that can be organisational or spatial (Jackson 1999) and increasingly diffuse in terms of their regulation. Indeed, to be truly collaborative, Gosling and Mintzberg (2003) point out that responsibility must be distributed in a way that allows it to ‘flow naturally to whoever can take up the initiative and pull things together’, as in self-managing teams.

In contemporary gallery education this ‘self-managing team’ is most likely drawn from a mix of professions that operate in widely different contexts. Variance derives not only from the skills base and ‘work culture’ of individuals but also contractual arrangements, timetabling and professional status. If learning is to take place at all, CPD opportunities must be devised that take account of these influences. A mix of teaching and learning methods will have more impact than the provision of a traditional ‘course’ delivered in a didactic manner or, conversely, a reliance on ‘self-reflection’ alone, which can be uncritical and lacking in purpose if not challenged by the critique that others, adopting different approaches to the same activity, offer (Newman 1999).

The inclusion of all the professions in contemporary gallery education CPD is therefore imperative if we are to avoid the bias that can develop when information and work experiences are viewed through a single professional paradigm (Eraut 2000). Eraut is explicit when he states (cited in Furner 2007): ‘tacit knowledge is personal knowledge which may be used uncritically because people either believe that it works well for them or lack the time and/or disposition to search for anything better – a common feature of situations where people are overworked or alienated.’
The challenges of the workplace are often only addressed through what Argyris and Schon describe as 'error detection and correction', or single-loop learning. In this scenario only tacit knowledge is relied on; to achieve double-loop learning that could change norms and practices (Argyris & Schon 1978), the individual must step outside personal and professional assumptions (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997: 193).

Embedding action learning into the project brief affords the opportunity to filter the more intangible aspects of project planning (What do we want to do? Why do we want to do it? Where might it take us?) through a wealth of experience and professional knowledge in a supportive peer-led environment. This process brings planning into line with systems thinking (Senge 1990), which is based in seeing wholes rather than parts, and working with the patterns and relationships that emerge across and between activity (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997: 193).

Building on the Wenger and Snyder (2000) definition of communities of practice as 'groups of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise', a desirable by-product of embedding action learning could be, on a local level, the establishment of communities of practice that become self-managing and self-sustaining. The form would be different in focus to other types of organisation, as the following table (derived from Wenger and Snyder 2000) shows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of group organisational forms</th>
<th>What is the purpose?</th>
<th>Who belongs?</th>
<th>What holds it together?</th>
<th>How long does it last?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community of practice</td>
<td>To develop members' capabilities; to build and exchange knowledge</td>
<td>Members select themselves</td>
<td>Passion, commitment and identification with the group's expertise</td>
<td>As long as there is interest in maintaining the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal work group</td>
<td>To deliver a product or service</td>
<td>Everyone who reports to the group's manager</td>
<td>Job requirements and common goals</td>
<td>Until the next reorganisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project team</td>
<td>To accomplish a specified task</td>
<td>Employees assigned by senior management</td>
<td>The project's milestones and goals</td>
<td>Until the project has been completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal network</td>
<td>To collect and pass on business information</td>
<td>Friends and business acquaintances</td>
<td>Mutual needs</td>
<td>As long as people have a reason to connect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpreting how the value of communities of practice can be measured, Wenger and Snyder (2000) suggest evaluation by non-traditional means: for example, listening to the stories of participants and building up a picture of engagement and self-identified benefits to the work environment over time.
Discussion of findings

This section reports the findings that form the evidential base for evaluating the impact of the action learning set: from the group discussion and the individual questionnaires. As a participant observer O'Brien found herself with the twin responsibility of active engagement with, and critical reflection on, the action learning process. Whilst challenging, it is her belief that this enhanced the research framework because it required her to contrast the more philosophical aspects of action learning, which could be categorised as ‘reflecting on action in action’ (Newman 1999), with a critical assessment of the method as a tool for identifying key issues and exploring the learning dynamic of different professionals before designing a CPD programme.

The results are presented as a narrative, in keeping with the research process which was dialogic and cumulative over the life of the action learning set. The findings are ordered into one section reporting observations and issues raised in a group setting and another setting out individual responses against the aims of the evaluative research project.

In reporting these findings O'Brien makes no distinction between the voices of teachers, artists or gallery educators unless there is a material issue at hand: where, for example, one or more individuals felt unable to speak openly because of their current or future employment relationship with other participants.

Group feedback

The group feedback session took place during the last hour of the final set meeting in April 2007. The purpose of the group feedback session was to reflect on emerging themes gleaned directly from the dialogue of the previous Action Learning Set (ALS) meetings. These themes were to be tested with the group during this collective feedback session in order to gauge their relevance to participants with a view to establishing a set of guiding precepts that could be taken forward in the CPD course planning.

This session was also the only opportunity for the group to reflect collectively on the ALS process. O'Brien, in her role as researcher, facilitated this discussion by proposing five key themes - as a point of departure only. Thereafter her role became one of scribe and participant. The key themes that opened this discussion were:

- identity (individual)
- equilibrium (group)
- dialogue
- inspiration
- our own expression

Identity

By making the agenda ‘us’, as one respondent put it, participants felt able to bring their own persona into the discussion, not simply their professional role. Once there, the group dynamic was subtly altered as individuals became more aware of the connections between people and not just the roles they represented. The resulting free flow of dialogue opens up what Dixon (1998) calls ‘emancipatory learning’, a form that relies on the reframing of a worldview through dissolving knowledge that was constructed through un-critical programmed knowledge. Dixon (1998) draws on the work of Bohm to make the case for offsetting the damaging effects of instrumentalised work relationships through the constructive use of dialogue. By re-focusing on person-to-person relationships rather than those relating person to object (or task) – the I–thou as opposed to I–it, as identified by Burber (1970) – the need for agendas becomes less important.

Identity was also important as individuals reflected on their own approach to participating in the ALS meetings. Some found the free flow and exchange of topics daunting, while others felt quite comfortable with it, pointing out that, for them, it was liberating not to have an agenda to follow. It was observed that ‘just meeting to talk opens up possibilities’, inferring that this forum is conducive to problem solving, as originally proposed by Revans (1983).
Equilibrium
Giving so much room to the individual voice required the group to reposition itself in its approach to participation. One issue that resonated with the whole group emerged as it reflected on what frequently happens in meetings at which participants are there to represent an organisation and/or contribute as a practitioner or expert from one field or discipline. Participants spoke of not being very active in meetings with a tight agenda, their normal response being to contribute when it was ‘their turn’ and then to ‘switch off’ while others got on with ‘their turns’. The ALS model makes this approach extremely difficult and, to an extent, less attractive: ‘if the agenda is you, you listen’ and ‘if you have to listen because you cannot speak’, participants grow more conscious of the group’s existence as a collective entity. However, the ALS format demands a heightened awareness of the individual’s contribution; it is not possible to just ‘attend’ in this forum.

While listening to the contributions of others participants reflected on their own response to what they were hearing and on what the response of other set members might be. This has implications for an individual’s ability to trust and speak honestly in a group setting, an important component of strong partnerships. In contrast with the set, when the desired outcome of a meeting is ‘intangible’ such as new ideas or solutions to seemingly intractable problems, individuals cited more regulated meetings as often unproductive.

Dialogue
The interchange between listening and dialogue lies at the heart of the ALS experience. Participants were very conscious of the shifts in their ability to receive (hear, listen) and deliver (speak, question) in a discussion. Being in stark contrast to the normal expectation, when their contribution is framed only by their professional expertise, this change in approach liberated many from an often-limiting expectation that they somehow have an ‘answer’ or solution to any problem that may arise. In taking away the need to have the answer or solution they were better able to ask questions from a different perspective or from a different place that was not their normal worldview. This correlates with a co-constructivist view of learning wherein individuals share and question knowledge and by extension are open to the ‘risk’ of admitting to ‘not knowing’ (Pringle 2006; Eraut 2000; McGill & Brockbank 2004) as a catalyst to achieving change. Individuals described the experience of participating in the action learning set as being ‘absorbed’ in dialogue that created connections and links at a deeper level than networking was able to achieve.

Inspiration/own expression
In making this paradigmatic shift to seeing situations from another’s point of view, individuals expressed their surprise at how they quite quickly made connections and links to their own work and in some cases saw ways to do things differently that they had not noticed before. One set member described this outcome as ‘passive inspiration’, derived from listening to another professional. This is important because effective change, as it relates to professional development, relies on creating, and holding, an holistic picture of how things currently work whilst identifying where change might be possible; the ability to simplify and synthesise insights from different mind-sets at once (Gosling & Mintzberg 2003).

As noted by Wenger (2007), the characteristics of group learning exemplified in the ‘community of practice’ happen at three levels: within the domain (shared competence), the community (interaction between professionals using that competence) and the practice (the honing of techniques used when delivering activity). The regular interaction afforded by the set was especially useful, in the opinion of participants, for generating ideas and deepening networks. The ‘inspiration’ found by listening to the views of others was compounded by a trust in the ideas that emerged from this form of dialogue. The group talked about establishing a better understanding of what motivates individuals in their work.

The majority of participants expressed their surprise at how neatly the ALS sessions reverted to the subject of gallery education – without prompting and without the confines of an agenda. Within the working world, institutionalised roles and status provide a framework that gives rise to interpersonal networks, but these roles are only validated through their acceptance by the interpersonal network (Scott 1991: 32). The action learning set, in allowing the boundaries of dialogue to range across many axes from the personal to the professional, from highly instrumental and context-specific workplace issues
to more intrinsic issues of ethics, social capital and self-reflection, reinforces both the professional role and the autonomy of the role holder.

It could be argued that taking part in an action learning set provides a means to recognising and accepting that one is part of a ‘community of practice’. It is therefore a useful tool in deepening group identification and strengthening partnership working. At the final set meeting of the South East cluster all the participants expressed an interest and desire to continue with the set, and plans were made for an additional set meeting to be held in June and then to continue in the autumn if possible. Whilst this may not be feasible, or desirable, in all cases, it does point to a visceral engagement with the action learning method as a personal learning process that should be considered in the CPD course design.

**Individual questionnaire responses**

In May 2007 the notes from the group feedback session were posted on the *enquire* South East hub with the intention that participants could respond to them or make amendments as they saw fit. Set members were asked to identify times when they would be available for a one-hour ‘exit’ interview. The notes also contained suggestions for questions that could be the basis for the individual feedback that would be gathered for the final part of the evaluation. The questions proposed were:

- can we identify personal outcomes from the ALS process?
- can we identify professional outcomes from the ALS process?
- can these be further grouped to reflect a group dynamic/ equilibrium that demonstrates the value of the tool in fostering partnerships to improve planning and delivery of gallery education?

As it transpired, no comments were received via the hub, which was not surprising and reinforced a general view that the hub was a tool for planning and communicating plans, not for discussion. (This is an area that should be addressed in future enquire research because there is much potential in using the hub for continuing dialogue.)

At the next set meeting in June, which was poorly attended due to the ill health of several set members, both the questions for the individual feedback and the interview style were discussed. There was concern that the summer holidays were approaching and that contacting set members would become even more difficult over the coming months. After some deliberation it was decided that the original questions that came out of the group feedback session contained the essence of what it was important to know, and that answers to these could just as easily be gathered in writing so that each set member had a chance to give his/her own assessment of the process. It was therefore proposed that two simple questions be put to each set member by email:

- What part of the action learning process worked for you and why?
- From your perspective, what effect did the action learning process have on the group taking part?

Responses were received from eight of the ten possible respondents (two artists, two teachers, one academic and three gallery educators). One artist has experienced difficulty accessing the questions but will give a response as soon as possible. No response is expected from the youth worker, who took part in only a few of the action learning set meetings.

The responses have been analysed using the evaluation report objectives as a first filter. Because of the small size of the sample and the qualitative nature of the data O’Brien decided against using data analysis software: key themes have been employed within each objective to provide weighting rather than establishing codes using key words. Where possible these themes have been presented in a chart format so that the frequency of similar responses can be easily identified; with such small numbers, however, these charts should be regarded as visual aids not quantitative evidence.

Whilst great care has been taken to attribute responses to the objective where they best fit, there have been instances where it has been impossible to make a definitive choice. In these cases, and because this is not meant to be a quantitative exercise, the response has been used under the heading of both objectives but in italics so that it is recognisable as a repeat response.
Feel supported, an empowering process.
Increase in self-confidence/self-esteem.
Building empathy and feeling empathised with.
I felt more confidence in myself and more clarity in how I perceived myself and my work.

When asked what worked well in the action learning method, all the set members identified doing away with a fixed topic of discussion or 'agenda'. Not having an agenda liberated the dialogue from an objective-based, outcome-driven context (Dixon 1998). Opening up the dialogue in this way required more focus from the individual, a more 'intentional' and 'self-responsible' orientation (McGill & Brockbank 2004: 42) that was embraced by set members, as the following responses demonstrate:

No agendas, it was about us.
Talking in “clean space” made me think of other aspects of the issue.
Group got better at listening to each other as time went on.
At the beginning I was concerned that we should be putting guidelines on things, e.g. that we must talk about things relevant to “gallery education” as that was why we were all there. However, often the real learning came from the more personal things people shared, which facilitated an understanding of where people were coming from, how they reacted to things and what they really thought.
Being in a forum where everyone was given the space to take part in a discussion and certain people were not allowed to lead or dominate as they so often do in “normal” meetings.
A board meeting feels like a distillation of individual views and opinions into a collective idea (problem/solution/consensus). The dialogue of the ALS is often very open and much heavier on content. There is no right or wrong answer.
Good to be reminded that not everyone is comfortable talking about what they are feeling or thinking.
I liked listening to other people talk about the problems they faced; that felt so familiar. And having a chance to hear the personal side from behind someone’s public persona.

Objective 1 – To find out what in the action learning process/method worked well/less well for individuals

From the responses received from individual set members it is clear that their personal experience of action learning has been positive. All the respondents reported that the process increased their self-esteem and their clarity of purpose. Examples were given for work situations as well as more personal issues.

Being reminded that other people understand or feel the same way.
Left behind the pressure to have all the answers without leaving behind our professional knowledge or experience.
Provided people with space in several ways – physical and emotional.
Realising that I wanted to prioritise my own practice as an artist in the work that I do.
The action learning process helped me to focus on what I wanted in my work; so much so that what seemed like a moan back in December really helped me to focus on what I wanted and actually turned into reality this year, and I find myself in a different job in the area I wanted to move into.
The sessions were regular and enabled me monthly to have time for self-reflection without some agenda attached.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1: what in the action learning process/method worked well for individuals and the group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no agenda/open discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ALS style of “not problem solving” but helping the individual have a new perspective on whatever they raised was invaluable as it helped you to take control.

A greater appreciation of the role of dialogue and the value of taking time and according focus.

Finding a way to connect individual reflection with a group scenario so that learning can be compounded.

We often just make do/act in our professions; these sessions enabled me to stop and think.

There was a negative side to this freedom, however. Some set members expressed frustration that ‘there wasn’t time to follow up an issue that arose.’ There are two immediate explanations for this. Firstly, the set was using the process in an exploratory way and therefore not utilising the opportunity it affords for presentation and re-presentation of a problem or theme over time. Secondly, the timeframe for meetings, at three hours for a set with ten members, was short.

Another aspect of the action learning method that worked well for individuals was the opportunity to listen to a mix of professional views. This worked well not only because of the topics it brought to the fore but also for the range of questions it elicited. Set members identified the value of this opportunity in the following ways:

Useful to hear about gallery education and art education from the other perspectives that were in the group: teachers and gallery education officers.

Moving beyond the individual need “to be seen to know” the answers/solutions by exploring issues and activity through listening to others describe their experiences.

An insight into what goes on when others are doing their jobs, which in turn allowed me to understand my own position better.

Different way of thinking about our work and how we communicate with each other in a work environment.

Brought together people from different backgrounds, different geographical areas, that may not have happened otherwise, and may go on to produce new working partnerships.

It has often been stated by individuals within the ALS that one of its greatest qualities is the exchange of views and opinions that are free from professional hierarchies and organisational/career politics.

Giving space to reflect on partnership and collective activity.

Increase in empathetic approach to professional development and peer relationships.

Greater awareness of peers and more enhanced relationships.

To achieve what Argyris and Schon (1978) call ‘double-loop learning’, there must be a challenge made to the assumptions with which professionals work. For the South East cluster of enquire the action learning set experience provided a forum for framing meaningful challenges to the assumptions they make about gallery education and the working cultures and values of the range of professionals involved in its delivery. Despite the set members having worked together for over a year, and in some cases longer, the meetings brought to light many professional and personal points of view that clearly impacted on the various individuals’ interpretation of actions and events.

Although, generally, set members reported feeling an ‘increased understanding amongst the group’, for some there was also cautiousness:

It was sometimes difficult to speak in front of people who were my employers and I know I held back somewhat and would have been much freer to speak had the group consisted of people with whom I did not also work.

Whilst this is not a comfortable observation, it does demonstrate the sort of issue that can arise in an action learning set, and one that cannot easily be addressed through planning or consultation, because nested in it are issues of professional status, remuneration, job security, not to mention personal choice, autonomy and self-esteem. This individual’s perspective of ‘employers’ and ‘people with whom I did not also work’ is linked, as Erat pointed out, to ‘episodic memories’ which are derived through workplace culture and socialisation processes (Erat 2000).
Objective 2 – to summarise general themes emerging from the action learning set that are relevant to all professional groups involved in the delivery of gallery education

The effectiveness of action learning as a development tool operates on personal and professional levels. It is built on the premise that to manage an activity well the ‘thinking’ cannot be separated from the ‘doing’ and that in order to keep them in balance there must be a commitment to constant reflection and learning (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997). The set members valued the opportunity to hear about the gallery education experience from the range of professionals involved in its delivery:

It was useful to hear about gallery education and art education from the other perspectives that there were in the group: such as from teachers and gallery education officers.

It brought together people from different backgrounds and different geographical areas that may not have happened otherwise, and may go on to produce new working partnerships.

An insight into what goes on when others are doing their jobs, which in turn allowed me to understand my own position better.

We all got to know each other as human beings, in a way, rather than determining who they were by their professions (and, with that, our own prejudices maybe?)

It gave us a different way of thinking about our work and how we communicate with each other in a work environment.

Different way of thinking about our work and how we communicate with each other in a work environment.

Development of learning environments that promote and/or prioritise exploration around identity dialogue and contextualised thinking within a safe environment.

Gallery education creates an interchange between working worlds where thinking and doing can take as many different directions as there are individuals involved and subjects addressed. Be that as it may, these working worlds also have very distinct norms and strong ‘in-group’ identification. The artist, the teacher, the learner, the gallery educator, each has a ‘social’ identity as well as a ‘personal’ identity that infuses the work he/she undertakes. Motivation factors also vary widely: for example, when the artists spoke about their practice in terms of it being a single self-authored and endorsed activity (Ryan & Deci 2000), they were demonstrating intrinsic motivation. Conversely, teachers often spoke of extrinsic motivational factors, such as league tables, parents and the expectations of pupils. The weight and meaning these factors carry for each profession is difficult to grasp if it is not obtained through personal interactions which can express sentiment as well as the problems associated with adaptation (Scott 1991).

As interaction develops into trust, a forum emerges wherein empathy can flow and the conditions for transferring knowledge across boundaries are established. Knowledge transfer assumes that expertise is maintained but ‘shared’ with others for whom it will offer opportunities to improve their performance by being integrated into their practice. Learning obtained in this way is part of a generative system not a reactive one (Senge 1990; Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997: 197) and is therefore less threatening, as set members’ responses show:

Permission “not to know”. We all left our “professional personas” behind, and the pressure to have all the answers, without leaving behind our professional knowledge or experience.
No agendas – it was about “us”, not an answer to be found or problem solved.

Trusting in the process – something interesting and relevant always came up.

Moving beyond the individual “need to be seen to know” the answers/solutions by exploring issues and activity through listening to others describe their experiences.

... The dialogue of the ALS is often very open and much heavy on content. There is no right or wrong answer.

Set members also identified having time to ‘think’ outside of an agenda as a positive aspect of action learning:

The part that worked for me was being in a forum where everyone was given the space to take part in a discussion and certain people were not allowed to lead or dominate as they so often do in “normal” meetings.

Free to be able to talk about whatever I wanted, whether personal or professional, and to feel I could talk almost in an unedited stream of consciousness.

Having a “space” to really think about issues and reasons behind our work that often get squeezed out in day-to-day work routine.

We often just make do/act in our professions, these sessions enabled me to stop and think.

The combination of a sensitive forum and time gave set members the confidence to question and challenge individual beliefs and professional assumptions.
The evaluation framework of the action learning model includes the need to consider how useful action learning has been as a tool in developing the CPD programme. O'Brien feels that it has been useful, and would be useful in the CPD programme itself because it fosters a better understanding of professional interdependence amongst artists, teachers and gallery educators, as the following set members comments highlight:

An insight into what goes on when others are doing their jobs, which in turn allowed me to understand my own position better.

Sometimes difficult to speak in front of people who were in part my employers and I know that I held back somewhat and would have been much freer to speak had the group consisted of people with whom I did not also work.

Having a "space" to really think about issues and reasons behind our work that often get squeezed out in day-to-day work routine.

It helped us to bond with each other in a way that we couldn't have done if we'd only met in a typically professional capacity. It allowed us to mix with different people who see the work we do (gallery education) from different angles.

Sustainability comes through building relationships between the people delivering the work.

We are all constantly just busy working and would not often have a space to really think and reflect on what we do.

In addition, set members reported that the action learning model opened up dialogue and released pressure on individuals to 'perform' whilst in that forum:

The informal atmosphere and the provision of food made the occasion seem informal and relaxed.

Good humour and supportive atmosphere.

At the beginning I was concerned that we should be putting guidelines on things, e.g. that we must talk about things relevant to "gallery education" as that was why we were all there. However, often the real learning came from the more personal things people shared, which facilitated and understanding of where people were coming from, how they reacted to things and what they really thought.

Friends as well as colleagues.

Build trust, more comfortable to share what was on their mind.

Trusting letting go "to control" and being receptive to ideas and opportunities flowing from this.

Meeting once a month was enough time to think about and digest things, but also regular enough to retain a connection and to feel a progression.

Brought together people from different backgrounds and different geographical areas that may not have happened otherwise, and may go on to produce new working partnerships.

The format of the meetings allowed individuals to relax and build up trust slowly. It also fosters a type of dialogue that leads to 'connected knowing' by getting beyond roles to consider the relationships between them (McGill & Brockbank 2004). It may also be a useful tool in delivering some gallery education, as one set member identified as a professional outcome:

[I am] looking to adapt the ALS model within particular gallery outreach programmes.

For the individuals who participated in the set it was clear that such a people-orientated focus in what was, ostensibly, a work setting, was novel. A strong person focus is needed to see beyond that person's own professional context to envision work practices suitable to complex partnerships. CPD opportunities should include an active element that enables the individual to 'inhabit', mentally and emotionally, the context of the other.

The value of the technique built over time, which would happen even more with a group who didn't know each other as well as some of us did at the beginning.

No agendas – it was about "us", not an answer to be found or problem solved. Everyone valued hearing from other people as much.

A simple tactic but it worked very well I thought.

However the premise (spirit?) under which I believe we all entered into the ALS was that of professional development (betterment?)
The Deleuzean (2) model in which identity is defined less in terms of essence and more in terms of relationships. Equally, and to cross-reference the hierarchical model of the board of trustees, the nature of the groups and subsequent discussion were closer again to his model of "nomadic thought" as opposed to the singular.

This idea of development, learning and thought being more contextualized resonates with much of the research that has thus far informed the development of enquire.

From the first meeting it became clear that part of what bound set members together, and therefore rose naturally to the surface in dialogue, was a common interest in all of the diverse elements of gallery education. Through the action learning set the processes, forms of organisation, belief systems, institutional norms and values that inform the work came to the fore and were, as Sekules (2003) suggests, confronted head on; but not with a view to create a template, a single correct way of doing things but rather to construct a scaffold appropriate and context-specific to the set members’ professional learning.

**Conclusion**

The research has demonstrated that participants regarded the action learning set as a valuable part of their continuing professional development. Set members reported that they had accrued personal as well as professional benefits from taking part: for example, all reported that the process had increased their self-esteem and their clarity of purpose in their working lives.

It is widely accepted that a key element of learning is the ability to transfer knowledge gained in one context to solving a problem in another but rarely does continuing professional development in the arts and cultural sector promote strongly enough the interdisciplinary learning opportunities that will speed up and facilitate that knowledge transfer. Within the relatively small microcosm of gallery education it is unrealistic to expect teachers, artists and gallery educators to master all the fundamentals of creative production, pedagogy or management of arts and culture sector activity. It is equally unrealistic to expect one method of CPD, for example the taught course, to satisfy the learning needs of such a diverse group of professionals. So, that new forms of CPD be developed is worthwhile, and probably imperative: those that allow the professionals to co-construct learning programmes as part of project work more generally.

The research has demonstrated that as the interaction amongst the set increased more trust developed and a forum emerged wherein empathy could flow and the conditions for transferring knowledge across boundaries were more soundly established. Knowledge transfer assumes that expertise is maintained but 'shared' with others for whom it will offer opportunities to improve their performance by being integrated into their practice. Learning obtained in this way is part of a generative system not a reactive one (Senge 1990; Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997: 197) and therefore is less threatening to set members who came from a variety of professional contexts and were sensitive to the assumptions held by others about their professional ‘expertise’.

Questioning and challenging the tacit knowledge associated with a profession, as well as sensibly reflecting on its worth and authenticity in a given context, is made possible through the action learning set. Moreover, if the set cuts across professional boundaries, it offers individuals the chance to practise their ability to admit ‘not knowing’ by abolishing all fear of asking ‘bad’ or ‘naïve’ questions (Eraut 2000; McGill & Brockbank 2004; Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997). This opportunity has resonance for both early-career professionals and established professionals who may be entering a particular work context for the first time. To question in this way requires confidence and, as Eraut’s research points out, confidence has a measurable impact on learning and most frequently arises from successfully meeting challenges in the workplace. But in order to seek out and take on challenges it is fundamental that an individual feels supported in that endeavour (Furner 2007).

To achieve what Argyris and Schon (1978) call ‘double-loop learning’, there must be a challenge made to the assumptions with which professionals work. For the South East cluster of enquire the action learning set experience provided a forum for framing meaningful challenges to the assumptions made about gallery education and the working cultures and values of the range of professionals involved in its delivery. Despite having worked together for over a year, and in some cases longer, the set meetings brought to light many professional and personal
points of view that clearly impacted on the individuals’ interpretation of actions and events.

The use of action learning as a tool for developing people and organisations has been growing steadily since the 1980s, when it was highlighted as an effective method for fostering and developing what can loosely be termed the ‘learning’ organisation. The learning organisation regards ‘people’ as the most valuable asset and therefore focuses development on creating conditions that allow individuals, working alone or in groups, to use the questioning of norms and the testing of new ways of operating to gain advantage in competitive market environments or complex systems of service delivery (Pedler, Burgoyne & Boydell 1997). Thus improvements to the delivery of service cannot be made when only one set of professionals – in the case of the proposed Artist Educator course, the artists – is regarded as ‘needing training’. The action learning identified this ‘blind spot’ of the original CPD programme planning and brought to the fore the need to think of new ways of including other professional voices.

In the current plans for the gallery education CPD programme the taught element of the programme will be made available to artists, early/mid-career gallery educators and newly qualified teachers. It is only through maintaining this mix of professional points of view that we can aspire to meet Veronica Sekules’s recommendation (2003: 146) that ‘if artists are to thrive as innovative educators, it must be in partnership with an educational community which really understands the character and potential of their involvement and most importantly of all, knows how to develop their own strengths in parallel.’

A secondary outcome of the action learning set was to test its ability to further partnership development. Partnerships are complex entities and, like personal relationships, they do not conform to a shorthand formula that will enable the replication of ‘good practice’. The vibrant and catalysing mix of personalities, interests, workloads and project budgets all play a role in shaping the character of any one partnership. Moreover, this character is mutable and transgressive; in this way the partnership evolves in ways guided by individuals as well as activity.

As noted by Wenger (2007), the characteristics of group learning exemplified in the ‘community of practice’, happen at three levels: within the domain (shared competence), the community (interaction between professionals using that competence) and the practice (the honing of techniques used when delivering activity). The regular interaction of the set was especially useful, in the opinion of participants, for generating ideas and deepening networks. The ‘inspiration’ found by listening to the views of others was compounded by a trust in the ideas that emerged from this form of dialogue. The group talked about establishing a better understanding of what motivates individuals in their work. Relationships developing at this level are characteristic of the ‘extensive partnership’ identified by Doherty and Harland (2001).

Throughout the enquiry programme of research Wenger’s community of practice has arisen again and again. Whilst this evaluative research cannot claim to be conclusive, it does point to the community of practice as a more sustainable model for delivering contemporary gallery education than either project teams or work groups because its purpose is to build members’ capabilities and exchange knowledge, which are professional development objectives. It can be established, from analysing the set members’ feedback, that action learning is an effective method of giving shape to, and fostering, a community of practice.

Whilst action learning cannot provide more resources, it does bring individuals together quickly and efficiently, thus opening up communication, trust and empathy. It could be argued that a team brought together in this way is more efficient and effective in its use of the resources it does have, because less time is spent ironing out positioning and misunderstandings about points of view, ways of working and levels of commitment. Through action learning individuals develop relationships that move beyond their work roles and build inter-professional understanding and empathy.

Today, we are witnessing an enormous cultural change, which shifts the ground on which art museums have stood so firmly for so long. Changes in social structures, in cultural allegiances and in personal identities go hand in hand with
changes in the nature, control and functions of knowledge. Today, museums are subject to diverse demands to enable them to play valid roles in new worlds. Art museums must demonstrate their viability and argue their value in new contexts where former values are no longer taken for granted. (Hooper-Greenhill 2000)

Contemporary gallery education, with its mix of artists, teachers, gallery educators and the people who take part in it, is an embodiment of what Matarasso (2005) has outlined as, 'relational practice'. Relational practice regards exploration and long-term relationships as activity in its own right, as well as producing 'unique experience(s) wherein every individual makes a contribution'. If this practice, which defies commodification by the nature of its outputs, is to thrive, the professionals involved in its delivery must be explicit about its value to the arts and cultural ecology. Furthermore, they must forefront the benefits of participation that flow as intangible gains back into the professions not just of the target groups at which gallery education activity is aimed. Professional learning could be one of those gains.

The University of Sussex views the *enquire* 'Learning and the Gallery' CPD programme as a logical extension of its partnership with the regional *enquire* galleries and engage. It offers the university the opportunity to bring to the fore its particular expertise in teaching and learning, blending as it does the work of academic departments (CCE, School of Education) with work-based learning development. Working in partnership provides the university with direct contact with employers and professional bodies, contact that is vital to the development of future-focused qualifications that meet the needs of arts and education settings alike, so that transitions from study to work are better supported.

CPD programmes such as this offer opportunities to develop third-stream activity, thus fulfilling the shared objectives of both the Higher Education Funding Council and Arts Council England, as highlighted in their policy framework document Arts, enterprise and excellence: strategy for higher education (2006).

References


Holden, J. (2007) 'Capturing Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy', DEMOS.


Notes

1. Professor Reginald Revans was active in the management field for over sixty years. After World War II he was Director of Education for the National Coal Board (NCB) and it was in this context that he laid the foundations for the development of action learning. Later he became Professor of Management at the University of Manchester Institute of Technology. Reg Revans died aged ninety-five in January 2003.

2. Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) French philospher who proposed that identity is forged through an exploration of the 'difference' inherent in all things not through similarity.
SOUTH WEST CLUSTER RESEARCH REPORT

Report on research undertaken by SpaceX, Phoenix Arts Centre, the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW), Plymouth Arts Centre and the Lighthouse Visual Arts Centre in collaboration with the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter, and partner artists and teachers.

Final report by Gert Biesta, The Stirling Institute of Education, University of Stirling; Robert Lawy, Jane McDonnell, Helen Lawy, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Exeter in collaboration with Hannah Reeves, (Spacex), Caroline Mawdsley (coordinator and Plymouth Arts Centre), Johanna Korndorfer (CCANW), Nia Thorpe (Phoenix Arts Centre), Ula Dajerling (coordinator/artist).
The art of democracy: gallery education and young people's democratic learning

Well I think it’s sort of helped us to take into account that we can’t just think about our own ideas, you have to think about other people’s ideas and how they think things should fit together. Oillie

It was kind of a majority thing and then people who didn’t want we kind of persuaded but not in a ‘do this’ way but in a well this might be better than that cos of this’, but in more like a joking way. Isobel

I think it is better when you are working with more people because if you’ve just got one idea then you’ll go with that and you’re not open to anything else. When there are more people you can think of more ideas and change it and make it better. Josey

Change happens in small steps and ownership of change takes time. Artist

Introduction

This report provides an account of the work of the South West cluster in phase 2 of the enquire programme. The overall aim of the programme was to explore and identify the conditions for maximising the transformative potential of gallery education for young people (Taylor 2006: 15). The aim of the work of the South West cluster was to investigate the benefits of gallery education in providing opportunities for young people’s democratic learning. The cluster set up a number of artist-led projects for young people from secondary schools in the South West of England and from a pupil referral unit (see below). The projects, which were conducted in several art galleries between October 2006 and November 2007, were aimed at providing opportunities for democratic participation and decision-making in the context of gallery education. Democratic learning encompasses both process and outcome: it refers to practices of learning that are democratic in quality and have the potential to impact positively on young people’s growth as democratic citizens. Democratic learning environments provide opportunities for participation, for having a say, for contributing to the shape and form of collective activities, for paying attention to difference – different opinions, understandings, motivations and values – and to do so in an inclusive way.

The overall aim of this research was to gain an understanding of the unique contribution the projects could make to the participants’ democratic learning. In order to achieve this the research focused on the experiences and the learning of the participating young people and of the artists who led the projects. The work of the South West cluster was informed by the assumption that gallery education is significantly different from art education conducted in school or museum settings, not only because gallery education entails the active involvement of artists (Pringle 2006) but also because artist-led projects in a gallery context have the potential to provide opportunities for democratic participation that are not normally available in other art education settings, particularly within schools. The ambition of the projects in the South West cluster was to explore the potential for democracy and democratic learning within art education in galleries. The research afforded an opportunity to better understand the complexities of the ‘art of democracy’ within gallery education.

Gallery education and young people’s democratic learning

The push for public institutions to become more democratic has created conditions for museum and galleries’ curatorial and education departments to plan projects which deliberately seek to involve participants in decision-making and programming. This involvement may be embedded within a larger project. It is also recognised that much gallery education practice uses a methodology which embraces shared meaning making and decision-making. What distinguishes educational work within gallery settings from art education in schools and, to a lesser extent, museums, is first and foremost the pivotal role of the artist educator. As Pringle (2006: 13) has argued, the commitment to working with professional artists is one of the defining characteristics of contemporary gallery education. The majority of gallery education activities involve intense, facilitated sessions which can differ from museum based education and do differ from art education in schools in that they are characteristically led by freelance creative practitioners, involve smaller numbers of participants and frequently involve new and
challenging ideas for participants (Pringle 2006: 13). Also, gallery education activities are not bound by curriculum directives and assessment requirements in the ways in which this is the case in school based art education.

Within contemporary gallery education ‘artists are assumed to consider creative practice as “an imaginative process of problem-solving” (Pringle 2006: 14). How artists work within this model of creative practice is particularly relevant in the context of gallery education. According to Pringle (2006: 14), artists ‘have the ability to take risks and experiment and they feel comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty’; they ‘engage in “reflective practice”, wherein they simultaneously engage in the manipulation of materials and processes whilst also critically appraising the work in order to progress it’; and they ‘are involved in “experiential learning” which takes place through the connection of past experiences with new phenomena, and moves from reflection to active experimentation’. The central role of the artist as educator and the experimental nature of the teaching and learning in gallery settings allow for different ways of acting and being of the participants and thus can provide learning opportunities that are significantly different from learning in other, more formal educational settings. This is also due to the fact that gallery education allows for engagement with ‘art-in-process’ and with ‘artists-in-action’.

The emerging research literature on gallery education – including work from phase 1 of the programme (Taylor 2006) – has predominantly focused on understanding the particular nature of learning opportunities, practices and outcomes within gallery education projects (Pringle 2006). It has highlighted the experimental, collaborative, dialogical and open-ended nature of such learning processes, particularly when compared to formal school education. It has also documented the impact of participation in gallery education on the development of critical thinking, self-determination and identity, and human, cultural and social capital (Taylor 2006). What has been relatively absent in the discussion and research so far, is attention to the democratic quality of the learning processes and practices and their impact on young people’s development and growth as democratic citizens. At one level this is surprising, because the open-ended, collaborative, experimental and in a certain sense egalitarian nature of gallery education projects provides young people with ways of being and acting – including ways of being and acting together – which exemplify some of the key characteristics of democratic practices and processes. Gallery education, to put it differently, not only provides significant artistic learning opportunities for the participants but because of the nature of such work also provides them with significant democratic learning opportunities. Hence gallery education is not only an important field for understanding aesthetic and artistic learning, but also for understanding civic and democratic learning. This insight motivated the South West cluster to set up and conduct research on projects that focused on the potential for democratic action and learning of gallery education.

The South West partnership
The work in the South West cluster involved collaboration between five galleries, six artists and six educational institutions (a pupil referral unit and five schools). It comprised part of phase 2 of the *enquire* programme and was conducted in two phases (phase 2.1 and phase 2.2). Phase 2.1 comprised three projects which ran over several months; phase 2.2 comprised four projects.

Galleries
- The Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World (CCANW) is a new gallery space, located in Haldon Forest near Exeter. Drawing upon the work of contemporary artists, the centre explores the social, environmental and scientific issues involved in our changing relationship to nature.
- The Lighthouse Visual Arts Centre is an education-led arts centre situated within Brixham College. Opened in July 2006, the centre aims to engage the school and the wider community in the visual arts.
- Plymouth Arts Centre is a publicly funded contemporary visual art gallery and cinema and is one of the oldest arts centres in the UK. At the beginning of this project the organisation had recently appointed an Education and Outreach Curator, a post that had not previously existed.
- Space is a publicly funded contemporary art gallery in Exeter. The gallery’s focus upon socially engaged and process-led artwork has provided a fertile environment for gallery education. Between six and eight national and international visual art exhibitions are presented each year.
• The Phoenix Arts Centre is a local authority funded arts centre based in the centre of Exeter. The gallery supports local and regional artists as well as national and international artists. Since becoming a partner in the enquire project the Phoenix has been successful in attracting funding for an education officer.

Artists
• Ula Dajerling works within the fields of performance art, video and installation, focusing on the interactions between body, object and space.

• Mark Greenwood uses duration and ritual to perform and generate texts around ideas of gambling, futility and the absurd. Greenwood has performed in the UK, Europe and the United States.

• Ruth Harvey-Regan is an interdisciplinary artist whose work is based in the practice of social sculpture. She is currently involved in an eco-art tree project, University of the Trees.

• Jared Louche is an artist, musician, DJ, poet, and experienced gallery educator.

• Maddy Pethick is concerned with image making, with people and place, and creating situations for sociable, open-ended making.

• John Sealey is a filmmaker. His practice is grounded in cultural identity, interrogating areas of research within Diaspora histories.

Schools
• School A is a pupil referral unit (PRU) based in a city in the South West. The school has around twenty-two students aged from fourteen to sixteen who have been permanently excluded from schools in Exeter and East and Mid Devon. It is one of the first PRUs to have achieved Artsmark Silver, a national award scheme managed by Arts Council England that recognises schools with a high level of provision in the arts. The unit worked with Spacex in the first phase of the project (2.1).

• School B is an 11-16 specialist language college in a city in the South West with about 1,200 students, 2.5% of whom have special educational needs. This school has been working in partnership with Exeter Phoenix in the enquire project.

• School C is an 11-16 specialist media arts college in a town with a wide rural catchment area. There are around 1,500 students, 7.4% of whom have special educational needs. School C worked with CCANW in phase 2.1.

• School D is an 11-16 specialist college of media arts with around 650 students. 8.5% of the students have special educational needs. School D has been participating in enquire with CCANW.

• School E is an 11-16 specialist visual arts community college with around 900 students. 4.7% of the students have special educational needs. The school has a visual arts centre within its own grounds.

• School F is an 11-18 specialist language, mathematics, computing and vocational inner city school with around 1,500 students. The percentage of students with special educational needs is 12.7%. The school has been in partnership with Plymouth Arts Centre.

• School G is an 11-18 inner city specialist performing arts college with around 1,200 students. 19.2% of the students have special educational needs. This college has been working in partnership with Plymouth Arts Centre.

Research aims
The overall aim of the research, which was conducted by a team from the School of Education and Lifelong Learning of the University of Exeter, was to gain an understanding of the unique contribution the projects could make to the participants’ democratic learning. The more specific aims were:

• to gain an understanding of the experiences of the participating young people

• to gain an understanding of the experiences of the artists

• to document the dynamics of the projects, with a particular focus on democratic learning

• to assess the impact of participation in the projects on young people’s democratic learning
Theoretical framework

The work and the research in the South West cluster was informed by views about democratic learning which situate such learning processes in the actual practices and communities that make up young people’s lives. In this section we outline this wider theoretical framework. It focuses on the idea that democratic citizenship should be understood as a practice rather than a status or outcome; it sees citizenship learning as circular, recursive and cumulative, rather than as linear; it emphasises the importance of contexts, relationships and dispositions in understanding citizenship learning and it approaches democracy in terms of ‘action-in-plurality’.

From citizenship teaching to democratic learning

In discussions about the future of democratic societies it is often argued that schools have a unique contribution to make to the development of young people into democratic citizens. The emphasis in such discussion is commonly placed on the transmission of so-called ‘citizenship dimensions’ (Kerr 2005): the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that are considered to be essential for good citizenship. Although these dimensions do have a role to play in citizenship learning, the idea of education as the production of ‘good citizens’ through the transmission of a particular set of knowledge, skills, values and dispositions is not without problems (Biesta & Lawy 2006; Biesta 2007). One problem with such a view of citizenship education is that it is largely aimed at individual young people. The assumption is that they, as individuals, lack the proper knowledge, skills, values and dispositions to be the democratic citizens they should be and that if these dimensions can be successfully transmitted to young people they will transform into ‘good citizens’. This way of thinking not only individualises the problem of young people’s citizenship by assuming that they lack the ‘right’ knowledge, skills and dispositions, it also individualises the idea of democratic citizenship, most notably by assuming that a democratic society will simply emerge when all citizens have acquired the ‘right’ citizenship dimensions. Such a way of thinking is particularly problematic because it is based upon a static conception of democracy and a static notion of democratic citizenship, one of which sees democratic citizenship as the outcome of a particular developmental or educational trajectory.

From citizenship-as-outcome to citizenship-as-practice

A major problem with the idea of citizenship-as-outcome is that it conceives of democratic citizenship as a status that is only achieved after one has acquired the ‘right’ knowledge, skills and dispositions. This places young people in the problematic position of ‘not-yet-being-a-citizen’. Whilst there may be practical reasons for not allowing young people to vote until they reach a certain age, there are few reasons for denying young people their status as citizens, given that they are part of the fabric of society, inscribed in the larger socio-economic and political order. In this sense they are always already citizens. Whereas the theory and practice of citizenship education seems to rely on the idea of citizenship-as-outcome, from the point of view of civic learning, it makes much more sense to think of citizenship as an ongoing practice (Lawy & Biesta 2006). The idea of citizenship-as-practice not only makes it possible to account for the fact that from an empirical point of view young people are always already a member of society, it also makes it possible to acknowledge that citizenship is not something that can simply be taken for granted; rather, it has to be achieved again and again (Biesta 2007).

Citizenship learning

The idea of citizenship-as-practice also raises different questions about learning. It makes it possible to see that citizenship learning is not something that precedes actual citizenship, rather, citizenship learning is something that continuously accompanies actual practices of citizenship. Young people learn from the situations, practices, relationships and experiences that make up their lives. In such situations they learn the value of democratic and non-democratic ways of action and interaction and through their experiences they also learn about their own position as citizens. This means that if we are concerned about young people’s citizenship, we should not simply or exclusively focus on the teaching of citizenship in schools. We should also aim to understand what young people learn about their citizenship as a result of their participation – or, as is often the case, non-participation – in the practices and communities that make up their everyday lives. One issue here is to understand the specific nature of such learning process; the second is to understand the specific opportunities for acting, being and learning that exist in the different practices and communities that make up young people’s lives.
With regard to the first issue, we can characterise everyday citizenship learning as the learning that is the result of the actual ‘practices of citizenship’ in which young people are engaged. Unlike the idea of citizenship-as-outcome, the learning processes of everyday citizenship learning are not linear. They do not lead from a situation of ‘not-yet-being-a-citizen’ to a situation of fully-fledged citizenship. It is better, therefore, to think of these learning processes as fluctuating and as recursive. They fluctuate because they are intimately connected with the positive and negative experiences with democratic and non-democratic action in the communities and practices that make up young people’s lives.

While sometimes such learning processes may strengthen young people’s commitment to act democratically, on other occasions it may lead them to become less committed to the idea and practice of democracy. Young people’s citizenship is not simply the outcome of such learning processes, but constantly feeds back into the ways in which young people engage with the communities and practices that make up their lives. There is, therefore, a complex and dynamic relationship between citizenship learning and democratic action, and in precisely this sense we can characterise citizenship learning as recursive. Although citizenship learning should not be understood as a linear process that leads from non-citizenship to citizenship, it is important to see that processes of citizenship learning are cumulative: positive and negative experiences in the past cannot simply be eradicated and will influence future action and learning (Biesta 2008).

With regard to the second issue – understanding the specific opportunities that exist in the different practices and communities that make up young people’s lives – it is first of all important to acknowledge that different contexts do indeed provide different opportunities for democratic acting and being. Clearly, the opportunities for acting and being in schools are, for example, significantly different from the opportunities in work contexts, in the family, or in leisure activities. This is partly the result of the ways in which such practices are structured and of the specific rules and regulations that guide such practices. It is important to recognise that the ‘effects’ of such contexts are often mediated by the relationships that exist within such contexts. Young people often indicate how difficult it is for them to demonstrate initiative and democratic action in school. Yet many describe very positively their relationships with individual teachers (Biesta, Lawy & Kelly in press).

Such relationships in a sense mediate the effects of school as an institution. This suggests that the extent to which democratic action and learning can occur in particular contexts not only depends on the ‘objective’ characteristics of contexts and situations but also has to do with the quality of relationship within and across contexts. Individual young people will, however, benefit differently from such opportunities because citizenship learning is also dependent upon dispositional characteristics. Such differences are partly the result of individual differences between young people – differences in character or temperament – but they are also the outcome of earlier experiences and earlier learning.

All this suggests that if we aim to understand the potential of gallery education for young people’s democratic learning and citizenship, we should not only focus on the formal characteristics of gallery education and on the particular nature of gallery education practices, we should also pay attention to the network of relationships within such practices – the relationships between artist educators and young people and amongst the young people themselves – and we should focus on the individual experiences and learning trajectories of the young people.

**Democracy as action-in-plurality**

Although gallery education provides a wide range of different learning opportunities for young people (and, for that matter, also for the artist educators), the particular focus of this project has been on democratic learning. Democratic learning, as we have said in the introduction, encompasses both process and outcome. It refers to practices of learning that are democratic in quality and that have the potential to impact positively on young people’s growth as democratic citizens. How should we understand democracy in this context? Democracy is not confined to the sphere of political decision-making but extends to the participation in the ‘construction, maintenance and transformation’ of all forms of social and political life (Bernstein 2000: xxi). We do not conceive, therefore, of democracy as (just) a form of government but primarily as, what the American
educationalist John Dewey has called, a ‘mode of associated living’ (Dewey 1966). Democracy is a social and political ideal that has to do with inclusive ways of social and political action. Democracy is not about majority vote. It is about ways of acting and collective decision-making that allow for plurality and difference (Säfström & Biesta 2001). However, democracy does not stand for a kind of ‘disinterested pluralism’ in which people simply live alongside each other. It is about ‘engaged pluralism’ in which people try to live and act together in ways that do not erode plurality and difference. This is not to say that any situation of plurality and difference can simply be called democratic. The ‘art of democracy’ is precisely about processes of collective judgement and decision-making: about ways of acting and living together that can sustain plurality and difference. Democracy, in other words, is always about the fine balance between individual wants and the collective good. It is, in its shortest formula, about ‘action-in-plurality’ (Biesta 2006).

Methods

The research comprised three modes of data collection:

- semi-structured observations of project activities
  - group interviews and individual interviews with participating young people
  - group interviews with the artists

The artists kept diaries which were made available to the research team. All individual and group interviews with the young people were transcribed and internal reports were written about the interviews with the artists. The analysis was conducted by the research team using a grounded theory approach (Glaser 1992, Charmaz 2006). The focus of the analysis was on identifying relevant themes within the data and using those themes to gain a deeper understanding of underlying interpretations, experiences and processes, and to connect the outcome of the analysis with the theoretical framings informing the research.

The research team followed the ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA 2004) in which respect for participants, democratic values and the principle of academic freedom are considered in relation to responsibilities towards participants, sponsors and the research community. In order to ensure anonymity of the participants, no individual school has been named in this report and all names of young people are pseudonyms. With agreement, the participating galleries and the artist educators have been identified. Parental consent was sought for all young people under sixteen. All participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the projects at the start of the project. They were given the right to withdraw from the research at any time and were given the right to withdraw data collected from them.

Overview of the projects

We have indicated that the work of the South West cluster was conducted in two phases (phase 2.1 and phase 2.2). As we indicate below the projects in phase 2.2 were conducted over a much shorter time span.

Phase 2.1

The Phoenix Arts Centre Project

Between December 2006 and June 2007 artist Maddy Petthick led a project for eight Year 10 pupils. The project was based on an exhibition at Exeter Phoenix by Heather Tweed. The students spent seven full days away from school working on this project in the gallery environment. The group was made up of five girls and three boys. The project started by looking at the exhibition, which featured large-scale sculptures of Anubis, the jackal-headed god, dressed in human clothes. Maddy set tasks for the young people, such as making an impromptu artwork from the contents of each person’s bag.

Maddy was keen to engender a sense of responsibility for the project in the young people and asked them to start making decisions about the project almost immediately. The group decided that they would like to make artwork focused upon shoes. Their first idea was to make a giant carnivalesque shoe sculpture. They found that this was not possible because there was no space to store the artwork and so decided to work on a series of smaller works. Maddy held one-to-one discussions with the young people about their ideas and provided reference material for them to look at. Some young people worked individually and others in small groups. The group produced a body of artwork using a wide range of techniques, including
animation, photography, song writing, sculpture, and book making. One member of the group went on to do her work experience with the artist and also became a volunteer helper at Spacex's children's Artclub.

The Spacex Project
Filmmaker John Sealey and youth worker/musician Alex Norgate from the PRU worked with a group of five pupils aged fifteen and sixteen for five days between January and March 2007. The North, Tim Brennan's exhibition of low resolution landscape photographs taken using a mobile phone camera, provided a starting point for the project. On the first day the group visited Spacex, looked at and discussed the work in the exhibition. The group then went on a walk in the area around the gallery and took images on their mobile phones, which they shared. John Sealey also led some simple visual exercises, which introduced the concept of iconic and symbolic signs to the young people.

Back at school, the group decided to work on a project which used camera phones to make photographic work of 'mixed up' everyday activities and locations – an exam on the beach, sleeping on the moors, watching TV in the car park etc. The rest of the project took place at the school or in various outdoor locations chosen to fit with the ideas on the list of misplaced activities. Whilst in these locations the young people were often required to explain their project to members of the public. The resulting images are striking and one particular image of a staged exam on the beach is to be sited permanently in the school.

The CCANW Project
Ruth Harvey-Regan worked with twelve Year 10 students. A series of seven sessions were held at CCANW and in school between December 2006 and March 2007. The group were self-selected, but were all studying GCSE art. Of the ten who attended the first session at CCANW, only four had been to an art gallery before. Three of the students did not complete the entire series of sessions.

Ruth Harvey-Regan's approach to working with the group was social, informal and intimate. The very first activity she did was to get them to design mugs for their hot chocolate breaks and to initiate discussion about themselves and their interests. This evolved into quite complex discussions related to art, philosophy, quality of communication and art as communication.

The project was based on CCANW's eight-part exhibition series Forest Dreaming, an eclectic selection of artworks by different artists exploring the experience of entering a forest and the ways it stimulates our imagination and sharpens our senses. Activities devised by Ruth for the students stimulated both individual responses and group work. They included exercises that encouraged using the whole body as a sense organ whilst exploring the outdoor environment and when looking at the work in the exhibition. Their ideas in response to the exhibition explored a wide range of media including producing site-specific work in the forest.

Phase 2.2
The Spacex Project
Artist Maddy Pethick worked with four female and three male Year 10 students over the period of five days spanning two weeks in September 2007. She was assisted by the artist/writer Mark Greenwood. The project was inspired by an exhibition at Spacex by Eeva Mari Haikala, a series of photographic and film self portraits and still life studies. At the start of the project the group spent time at Spacex, exploring the exhibition and getting to know Maddy and Mark. The artists led the group in a series of exercises, which developed the students' interpretation of Haikala's artwork. For example, the students imagined that they had dived into an artwork and described to the rest of the group what they felt or imagined about the temperature, time of day, location, light, feel, smell and sound.

During the final days of the project the young people were afforded the opportunity to become 'artists in residence'. They were given a new context in which to work (a Victorian Methodist Church Community Centre) and a supportive informal studio atmosphere was encouraged. The young people explored the building through photography, variously finding beautiful architectural features, experimenting with costume and props, portraits/performances to camera and re-interpreting paintings by Vuillard and Bonnard (an idea borrowed from Haikala). Over a thousand photographs were created which were edited to fifty by the young people to form a temporary exhibition. On the final day of the project they decided upon a name for their exhibition, wrote a statement about the work and gave guided tours to other young people and teachers. It is hoped that some of the photographs will be reproduced on canvas for display at the school.
The Plymouth Arts Centre Project (1)
Artist and writer Mark Greenwood, assisted by Ula Dajerling, worked at Plymouth Arts Centre with ten students studying in Year 10. There were eight girls and two boys. For two and a half consecutive days the group worked in response to the exhibition, No Programme. This was an exhibition in two parts. One focused upon racism involving local clients of the racial justice organisation The Monitoring Group. The second part explored cultural hierarchies through the creation of a cultural award for the city of Plymouth. Both explored bureaucracy and culture which was the focus of the project's enquiry.

On the first day of the project Mark Greenwood ran a session introducing installation art, showing examples of work by Gustav Metzger and Joseph Bauys. The artist then led the group through a diverse series of exercises, including drawing without looking, working in groups to draw around each other's bodies and annotating these drawings with text describing situations in which they had felt unfairly treated. The group also explored instructive signs in the street around the Barbican area, which they then adapted to create placards for a staged demonstration. The group created an object that they would take on a long journey as a talisman or an offering to their hosts, which helped the participants to consider the concept of homeland and migration.

The group decided to bring all of these elements together into an installation. They used red electrical tape to create wall text and arrows, which brought together all of the material. The students invited staff from Plymouth Arts Centre and one of the exhibiting artists to a preview of the installation. They also worked with Janna Graham (one of the exhibiting artists) to develop a pamphlet about their project that was distributed around the city of Plymouth.

The Plymouth Arts Centre Project (2)
Ruth Harvey-Regan and Ula Dajerling worked with five girls and five boys studying in Year 10 for two and a half consecutive days. Initially, the group was introduced to one element of the exhibition No Programme. The group looked at artwork by the artist group Ultra Red, who had worked with the clients of The Monitoring Group. Over the next two days the young people explored ideas connected to the theme of racism, culture and identity through in-depth discussions, creative activities, physical exercises and games. A member of the local Sikh community who is involved with the racial justice organisation was invited to meet the student group and talk about her experiences of racism. Members of the group experienced wearing a turban and a religious headscarf in the streets of Plymouth and fed back their experiences to the rest of the group.

The rest of the project focused upon the 'cultural award relay' (a person presented with an award nominates someone else in turn). The group discussed the value of awards and questioned who gets nominated for awards and how. They then created their own awards to distribute to people whom they felt deserved recognition. The students brought in special clothing and dressed up and went out into the streets of Plymouth to present people, such as the owner of a dolls' house shop, a quayside chip shop and a street cleaner, with their awards. On their return to the gallery they discussed people's responses and why this sort of project might be called art.

The CCANW Project
A group of five young people participated in this project, facilitated by artist educator Ruth Harvey-Regan. The group comprised one male and four female participants and all were Year 10 art students. The project, which ran for five days over a period of two weeks, was based upon Possible Forests, an exhibition of maps, text and video at CCANW by the artist group Wrights and Sites. As well as working with Ruth, the students had the opportunity to meet Simon Persighetti, one of the Wrights and Sites artists, whose work was created throughout the summer of 2007, by the artists in dialogue with specialists in diverse fields (geography, architecture and planning, psychology, choreography), discussing ways of experiencing, re-imagining and planning the forest landscape.

The group explored Haldon Forest and made its own guided walks through the woods. Working with Ruth, the group began by 'mapping' Exeter City Centre. The group chose to direct their own work utilising ideas generated through writing and discussion. They worked as a team to produce a five-panel collaborative mixed media artwork on canvas. This was presented to their peer group and teachers in a special display.
The Lighthouse Visual Arts Centre Project
Eight Year 8 students worked with artist/poet Jared Louche and visual artist Maddy Pethick over a series of five days in September 2007. The group were working from the exhibition of artwork by Nicky Thompson, whose photographic images look at allotments as symbols of cyclical growth and collapse, decay, life and death. The artist educator, Jared Louche, took an informal approach, engaging the group in warm up exercises that opened up creativity and allowed the young people to see that his medium, poetry, had no ‘right answers’.

The following sessions were spent on broadening writing skills and discovering the dynamics of the group. Jared introduced the concept of group writing and group performance in response to Nicky’s artwork: “The writing was amazingly dense and resonant and the students were really pleased and surprised by their markedly increased abilities, they also recognised it and applauded it in each other” (Jared Louche). Jared had also asked the group to bring to the session something which reminded them of the artwork, and, using these, the group created an installation on white paper.

The group worked with artist educator, Maddy Pethick, who involved the students in performance and interaction. The group produced a book work as a final product. In addition the young people invited their teachers and parents to the gallery, where they recited the poems they had written.

Research findings
In this section we present the main findings from the research. We first explore and analyse the young people’s experiences. Next we focus on the experiences of the artists. We wish to emphasise that our findings reflect the experiences of the participating young people and artists. They capture their views about taking part in the projects and in this sense they represent their interpretations of their actions, activities, experiences and learning. Nonetheless, as we will make clear, this approach has allowed us to arrive at some interesting and important conclusions about the possibilities and limitations of democratic learning in gallery projects.

The projects in the first phase (2.1) were led by three different artists who all attended a workshop at the start of the projects in which we explored issues around young people’s democratic learning. The projects were conducted in three different galleries with young people from three different schools. The projects took place over a relatively long time frame (three, four and seven months). We conducted group interviews and individual interviews with participating young people after the projects had finished and had a pre-project and post-project discussion meeting with all three artists.

In the second phase (2.2) there were five projects led by five artists, two of whom had also been involved in the first phase. The projects were all conducted over a much shorter period of time (between two and a half consecutive days and five days over a two week period). Also we did not have an opportunity to explore issues about democratic learning in much depth with the whole team of artists. The second phase (2.2) was carried out about eight months after the start of the first phase projects.

We had a post-project discussion meeting with three of the artists (two of them had also been involved in first phase). We conducted individual interviews with a selection of young people from four of the five projects. We have not been able to include any young people from the Lighthouse project.

Young people’s experiences
In order to present our work in a systematic way we have analysed the data under seven headings: contexts/settings; structure and authority; decision-making; learning; relationships; time; art and creativity. We have been careful not to impose or force these categorisations onto the data; rather we used them as a tool to help us to present the data in a meaningful way. There were many instances where the data could have been used to illustrate points that we were making under the different headings. In demonstrating the connectiveness within and between different dimensions of young people’s learning, we have confirmed a fundamental assumption about the nature of democratic learning, which is that it is not an isolated element of young people’s being and doing but intimately connected to their actions and activities.
Young people’s experiences

**Contexts/settings**

All of the young people commented on the differences between the settings that they were being encouraged to work in and the school environment that they had come from, and had perhaps expected. Young people in phase 2.1 of the CCANW and Phoenix projects commented on the relaxed atmosphere in the project compared to the more structured atmosphere of school:

> At school you’re told specifically what to do and stuff. Josey

> Well, art in school is sort of strict and controlled. We have to do a set piece, but we sort of get to that set piece any way we like, but it has to be there, whereas with the ... we didn’t have to end up with a final project, you just, we kind of just used all the notes we’d made or pictures that we’d drawn. Ollie

This was supported by the young people in the phase 2.2 projects:

> They made me feel better because I didn’t have to worry about having to try to do my best because I was more free to do what I wanted so I was doing my best in my own way and I didn’t have to worry about if I do something wrong then I’ve done something wrong and I can’t go back to it. It was more like if I do something wrong then I can go and try again. It kind of made me feel better about my work. Paula

Certainly there was a strong sense of the projects offering something quite different from school:

> School is more of a guideline and you have to follow that guideline but you can do what you like so long as you stay to that. But in Spaceex [phase 2.2] you have to make your own guidelines up. It was cool. I could do whatever I wanted. Dick

Dick continued:

> It felt really good because you were in charge. It just makes you think. You could take an idea and expand on that idea really. Dick

This did not mean that all young people found the transition from school to the gallery context easy, particularly in terms of their expectations about the role of the artists and, in relation to this, their own role.

Because I was expecting it to be more like a teacher’s thing, like she would be like a teacher, saying ‘you have to do this’, and then when she didn’t mind what we did, like if you were just like sat thinking or doing whatever, I was quite surprised, because I was expecting her to say, ‘right, come on then, let’s get going’ and like telling you what to do, so yeah, I was surprised. Liz

… at school it’s kind of too led, but this was kind of too free, cos we often had those silent moments like we had in there a second ago, when we’re just like, ‘erm, yeah, really don’t know what to do’, cos we’re so used to not doing that, that it’s hard to get into the whole thing. That’s why like at the end of the day and after lunch was like our best decisions, because we’d got used to it. Claire

Nonetheless, many enjoyed the experience:

> It was good experience. I got a lot out of it like with photography. I got a whole new side of photography like what you can do not so much taking the pictures but setting the pictures up which I thought was fun.

It’s different from school. We got to do completely different stuff. Also the building. At first I didn’t really like the building cos we had to work in that place but ... There was just this one hall that wasn’t very interesting and then we got to go in this other bit which was cool and that is where I did my pictures. Dick

It is worth noting that the young people from the PRU who were involved in phase 2.1 of the project did not find the contrast between their school (the unit) environment and the gallery so different. Here much of the teaching is based in small groups and the teachers adopt a deliberately non-school approach to draw young people who have been excluded from their schools back into the system.

> Well, I don’t know, cos this school’s [project] like not really, it is a school, but it’s a laid back school if you know what I mean, so it’s kind of like the same I suppose. Paul

Other young people made a connection between their out of school activities and the project setting in order to articulate how the gallery context was different for them.
It was similar [to football] because it involved everyone together in a group, in football and in that project. Yeah I think it was really similar. Charlie

Well I play the cello and the group that I play in, cos we were just put together ... cos that's a way of communication as well so it's quite similar really. Molly

The difference between the more structured context of school and the more relaxed atmosphere of the project was critical. It provided the young people with a secure space in which they could develop and test out their ideas. As Sarah explained:

We all achieved quite high like with what we did. I was proud ... I was proud when we did the banners and we went round shouting in the streets. I was quite proud of that because I wouldn't have been able to do it if it was school or something but it was the fact that it was outside of school that I felt I could do it. [I felt] ... that there are no boundaries probably. Sarah

Structure and authority
The issue of structure was an important theme that emerged from our interviews with the young people and it was closely related to issues of power and authority. Many of the young people found it very difficult to come to terms with the perceived lack of structure and the lack of what they perceived to be an obvious plan or outcome orientation, in the artist-led projects.

Young people in both phases of the project were able to talk positively about being trusted and being given artistic and personal freedom during the project:

She even trusted you to do like your own artwork, like we got to choose what we wanted to do ... It's much more relaxed than other places and the way that it wasn't structured or anything. Claire

He [artist educator] didn't tell us right from the beginning what we were doing and he made everything that we were doing was just by chance and then you realised that it was all coming together for this big thing. It's nice not being told sometimes, just doing it. Debby

The young people also talked about the problems they had with adapting to this freedom and trust. For some young people this appeared to lead to a reappraisal of the positive aspects of the structure they are given at school, with some expressing a desire for more structure within the project.

It was good in some ways, but then it was kind of bad in some ways because you felt like you didn't have to do it. I know we did, but then it was more relaxed. Janet

... but there is such a thing as too much choice. I kept changing my work like a million times because there were so many ideas. I couldn't get hold of one idea. Ann

The contrast to the structure of school and the relative lack of structure of the project saw some young people thriving on the openness whereas others were left feeling aimless. This was particularly evident in phase 2.2 projects where the young people did not have the same amount of time to acclimatise to the projects as they had in phase 2.1.

There was no routine it was sort of, it was really well structured but although it didn't have a structure there but the structure came good because there was no structure. It flowed well ... You worked more freely I think ... Your ideas become more apparent. Your ideas flow better I think ... School has got a lot of structure to the lessons and stuff and there's something to focus on whereas this was all your own ideas and stuff and it was really good. Steve

Mandy, who took part in the Spacex project in phase 2.2 provided perhaps the clearest articulation of the problems that the young people faced.

I guess it was sort of about identity but it was a bit confusing because ... and they kept asking stuff like so what are we actually doing and what are we meant to be set out to do and stuff like that. And it was let's see what happens and it changed every day and it was a bit overwhelming in the head and I was 'Oh, I don't know what I'm doing!'

But in the end it turned out OK and I got ... I guess the photos I ended up taking. I took loads and loads of photos, but the photos I took on the last couple of days, I thought they ended up quite well. I usually do landscapes but these were all inside so when I printed the pictures off I on my computer I made them black and white so it made then look quite professional but I didn't think it was anything to do with
what they’d sort of said. It did give me better ideas about photography but it was mainly all stuff I’d done already.
Mandy

Decision-making
The process through which the young people made decisions and choices was central to the projects and the research. It was emphasised by artists in all three strands of the phase 2.1 projects and in a more limited way in phase 2.2 projects. In the Phoenix phase 2.1 project, for example, group decision-making was built into a series of small tasks in the early sessions and the students gradually took more ownership of this process as time went on. The young people checked for the consent of the whole group in later sessions and became more comfortable having group discussions in front of adults.

Opportunities for group decision-making were seen by some young people as learning experiences where they learned about the need to take other people’s ideas into account, about the fact that other people’s ideas could be better than their own and about the difficulties involved in taking everyone’s opinion into account when making a group decision.

Well I think it’s sort of helped us to take into account that we can’t just think about our own ideas, you have to think about other people’s ideas and how they think things should fit together. Ollie

I think it’s given me more confidence probably, and the way you can give your ideas and things, no matter what people think and just get your word out there and your ideas … Your idea’s not necessarily the best, like when you hear other people’s ideas and think, ‘Oh yeah, I hadn’t thought of that.’ Claire

There was no single explanation of the decision-making processes, rather they comprised a complex nexus of practices, with the young people making pragmatically rational decisions as they progressed (Hodkinson, et al 1998). Indeed, we observed young people taking action in practice in different contexts and settings.

There were two dimensions of the decision-making processes that we identified. First there was that part where individual subgroups were making decisions about their work. The second part occurred when all the subgroups came together to discuss the overall project. The amount of whole group decision-making varied from project to project, with a number of factors affecting this including the working styles of the young people and artists, and the contexts in which the projects took place.

The young people noted that there was more argument when working in a small group of two or three. However, they commented that this was often mitigated by the fact that the small groups were made up of friends who tended to agree.

It could be a bit more argumentative at times, cos you’re more comfortable with them, whereas if you’re in a big group, I think it could be awkward. Janet

When you work in small groups you tend to go with the people you get on with best, so like, cos they’re your friends, you’re most likely to agree with them on most things. Ann

These decision-making processes were not always or necessarily without problems. The young people sometimes found it difficult to come up with ideas of their own without input from the artists:

It took about an hour, it was me, Alex, Kurt and John just writing on the white board just jotting down loads of ideas and then choosing the best ones. Paul

Some of the young people were more committed to the projects than others, with some playing a less active and ostensibly peripheral role in the decision-making processes. Such nuances and gradations were evident in all of the projects that we observed. More proactive members of the groups tended to talk in more general terms about the processes:

If we didn’t agree with something we’d say why and then they would encourage, no not encourage, persuade no not persuade um … they would kind of say why they liked it and that. After they’d done that … if they had their own views about it they would share it with the group. We weren’t arguing about photos we were just doing our own thing. Paula

At some points it was like everybody throwing in, which was quite good because sometimes you can hear something and think, ‘actually that’s a good idea’ and just make it a louder
thing so other people can hear. Sometimes it was just like, 'shut up so we can talk'. Isobel.

Other young people were more prepared to listen and contribute in less overt ways. As Sally explained:

Claire didn't lead it but she was often the one who decided on some things but it was mostly a group decision but Claire was a bit more deciding ... I found it ... it got a bit annoying sometimes cos she took control but all the ideas were fine and I didn't have problems with what we were doing. I just went along with it ... cos I didn't want to cause any misunderstandings or arguments. It probably wouldn't but just in case I went along. Sally

Or as Dick opined:

I didn't think my ideas would be suitable for the group discussion. I usually think and then when the discussion is over do my own thing. And then Alex, I worked quite a lot with him, that was good, that worked as a team quite a lot. Dick

Others explained how they had appreciated the opportunity to discuss their work:

I think it is better when you are working with more people because if you've just got one idea then you'll go with that and you're not open to anything else. When there are more people you can think of more ideas and change it and make it better. But when you're on your own you can't do that ... it's like ... you can't criticise yourself. When there was a group everyone would think about what was bad and stuff but when you are with yourself you don't normally do that. Josey

We don't normally get the chance to say what we want because we don't have a lot of discussion. We just get our folders and get on with it cos we know what to do. We can ask the teacher for help or talk to them if we want to but we normally know what to do. Debby

Sometimes the young people found it difficult to deal with their feelings. This invariably led to some difficult exchanges:

I don't know but I just got angry. You can't just decide! We're having this photo! ... I just put pictures down and said, 'Well you're not moving it.' He mostly did what he wanted which was quite annoying cos we didn't get all the photos we and Denise might have wanted. I was trying to arrange it so everyone was getting involved but it was mostly Alan doing what he wanted to do and I know it is the typical man thing or whatever but I was trying to tell him that you can't get your own way all the time, you are going to have to accommodate with people. Mandy

Many of the young people did not rationalise or analyse the processes of decision-making. In many cases they appeared not to communicate with each other during an activity but merely to act in parallel observing one another and pulling their actions together to produce a final product.

I don't know. We didn't even really think about it. It was like, that went there ... we just did it. If we all liked it we did it, if not we'd get rid of it ... I didn't even think about it, I just started writing. We all did it instead of taking turns and that made it more interesting cos like they didn't know what I was going to write cos otherwise it would be like changing it. Debby

Ideas just popped into our heads and we just put it down. We discussed our ideas and then we just kind of agreed that we would do that certain thing ... We had some ideas but we kind of just, 'oh we'll do this' and then just did it. Sarah

We just came up with the idea by ourselves and kept adding stuff. Like I put a chair then she added on ... No we just did it. I just let her have a go, what she wanted to do and I watched it ... It was really amazing actually. You can do whatever you want. Jack

I didn't kind of talk with Dave. We just sort of did our own thing and then at the end I asked him where to put his art thing. Olivia

Learning
There was evidence of the ways in which the young people were able to learn from the artist educators about how to adopt democratic strategies for decision-making. For example in the early sessions in the Phoenix project the artist encouraged the participating young people to take responsibility as a group for small decisions affecting the everyday running of the project. For example, the group were asked to make decisions together about what time to have lunch, whether to have music playing in the project space, where the boundaries of the art space lay,
how they would plan a route around town, how money would be spent and how to present their work to an audience. The artist encouraged them to make these decisions democratically by ensuring all group members were present, that there was consent within the group and that the decision was made public by writing it down or announced to a third party. The young people showed evidence of taking on the artist’s role to ensure these elements were present in decision-making processes in later sessions.

That’s why like at the end of the day and after lunch was like our best decisions, because we’d got used to it. Claire

It was like we were more used to the way of working. Andy

Some students also showed evidence of learning about themselves in context and the different types of behaviour required of them in different contexts. For example, Claire talked about learning that she could take control of a group situation if she thought it necessary. This seems to show she had learned that for a decision to be made, the group discussion had to have a direction, that she was capable of adapting her behaviour to that situation and indeed that she had a responsibility to ‘take control’ and give the group discussion more direction.

I think it’s given me more confidence probably and the way that you can just give your ideas and things, no matter what people think and just get your word out there and your ideas and how if ... how you can just take control of a situation if you can see it’s not going anywhere, rather than just kind of think, ‘oh, no one else is saying anything’ we’ll just like go and ... if you know what I mean? Claire

Some students also showed evidence of learning that different modes of communication are conducive to different kinds of decision-making strategies.

It was kind of a majority thing and then people who didn’t want we kind of persuaded but not in a ‘do this’ way but in a ‘well this might be better than that cos of this’, but in more like a joking way. Isobel

Here, Isobel seems to show evidence of reflecting on the benefits of a deliberative approach (transforming the opinion of others through argument) in reaching a group decision while maintaining positive relationships within the group.

The key to understanding this was the trust that was being invested in the young people by the artist educators to take responsibility for their decision-making and actions. This was also evidenced in phase 2.2.

They [artist educators] make you look at things and then they were taking ideas out of you rather than them giving you ideas and going along with it. Yeah they take ideas out of you ... It’s better because it makes you think a lot more and also quite a lot of the exams are like thinking for yourself, it’s better if you’re not being fed like in my old school if you know what I mean, we were just given the information and it was just like copying ... like copying and remembering it in exams. That’s not very good for your thinking and doing things yourself. Josey

It felt really good because you were in charge. It just makes you think. You could take an idea and expand on that idea really. Dick

It is, of course, impossible to accurately predict what the impact that the projects will have upon the young people in the future. Nonetheless, some of the participating young people were able to articulate some of the benefits and learning that had ensued from participating in the project, also in relation to their self-understanding.

I’m not the kind of person who expects my ideas to be taken on board, so I wasn’t really paying attention to how I felt when people didn’t take it on board. Isobel

I kind of more like experiment with what I do a bit more. We’ve had a couple of lesson since and I started drawing what I wanted cos I thought ... cos we’re doing this thing where you cut out letters and you put it on a background and I was putting more of myself of my own ideas into it and ‘Miss’ said she really liked it. Debby

For some of the young people the project provided a forum for developing their self-confidence in a non-threatening environment. Paula for example explained how her experience of showing people around the art exhibition had affected her.

I was embarrassed because personally I thought I was not that good at English and since they picked me to go around and do that I was, ‘can’t do this’. As well as having to show
around people I didn’t know that’s kind of good cos it built up some self-confidence in me to do that and I was more open with what I said ... [I] gained a little bit of self-confidence and opened me up new ideas and opportunities for my GCSE art. I’m happy I went [to the project] cos in my GCSE I thought I was just going to do painting and oil pastels but I think I might do some photography now. Paula

In other cases the young people had their eyes opened to issues which they had not previously considered.

I didn’t know about stuff ... like racism and culture and stuff like that. I learned a lot but some of it I didn’t hear and some I don’t get because I’m not very good at English and I don’t understand. Jack

It has changed a lot of the way I think. I know it sounds silly because it was only a couple of days but it is, because of what it was about, racism. On the last day when we were talking to [one of the organisers] about stuff and I realised that adults actually care about what children, well teenagers are saying. Cos in school you don’t feel that you are treated ... well not with respect cos our teachers are quite good but like you feel like you don’t count. In the art thing they were really interested in what we were doing and [the artist educator] was interested in us. Debby

Finally it enabled some young people think more deeply about possible future careers.

It’s made me think about what sort of a job I want to do. Like I wouldn’t mind doing an art based project job like at an art gallery or theatre. It’s given me more of an idea of what to do for a career. Sarah

**Relationships**

An important difference between school and the gallery context was that the young people were in an environment where they could more easily develop closer and more intimate relationships than were available in school both with their peers and with the artist educators. Particularly important was the way in which the artist educators engaged with the young people and the respect that the artists showed, for example, through the use of first names; in another case through the provision of hot chocolate and individual mugs; and in yet another case with the artist educator playing table tennis and pool with the young people.

Talking to her by her first name, I don’t know, just instead of Miss or Mrs like a teacher ... We saw her as more of a friend than a teacher. Andy

She was quite obsessed about us calling her [by her first name], not Miss. Janet

The art teachers ... weren’t like teachers they were acting like associates no ... like people who are part of the group, like people on the same level. They weren’t really ordering us around or anything so it made us feel more better I think because I think when there is a teacher or someone who you have to follow the rules by and all that, it kind of makes you feel insignificant ... They weren’t really bossing us around or doing anything like that. They were actually more friends. Paula

Many of the differences were marginal when judged on their own however when taken together they set an entirely different tone and enabled a different and more equitable set of relationships to develop. Such relationships were not only a function of the way in which the artist educators engaged with the young people but were also a function of the relatively small group sizes which were in many senses a prerequisite.

We don’t normally get the chance to say what we want because we don’t have a lot of discussion. We just get our folders and get on with it cos we know what to do. We can ask the teacher for help or talk to them if we want to but we normally know what to do ... It was really different. Well in some lessons we’ll discuss but not many people get involved because there tends to be louder people in the group and because it is a smaller group then it is easier ... I would get involved but a lot of other people won’t. In school there would be people talking in the corner and you know some people wouldn’t be listening so you feel there’s not much point in saying anything because most people don’t care what we’re talking about anyway. In a smaller group everyone was listening and each person had their turn to speak sort of. Debby

Whereas in some instances the young people were able to learn how to interact with others in some situations we saw the young people retreat into their shell.
It depends on the people that are around. I feel intimidated by really loud people and cos I show a bit of push back when they’re loud and they take control. When I’m around people who are more similar to me I’ll say stuff … yeah people who are willing to listen. Sally

When I meet new people I keep all my ideas inside but during the end because I knew who I was with I was more open. Paula

Group dynamics were important. For many young people these were linked to issues of trust.

It’s hard to trust people cos of the whole past of being bullied by everyone. They would cosy up to me and pretend to be my friend and that still happens now so I don’t know if I do have any actual real friends or if they are just pretending so that’s why I just want to be able to trust people. Mandy

For some of the young people there was a sense that they needed to be associated with a particular group of young people.

The ones who were considered cool were really popular and dressed well and stuff like that … seeing what they were like around other people as well. I just sort of caught … just caught on. Josey

**Time**

One of the main differences between the phase 2.1 projects and those in phase 2.2, related to their organisation. Whereas the former were spaced over a long time frame the phase 2.2 projects were conducted over a much shorter time frame and with fewer meetings. This had a number of ramifications both for the artists who commented on the difference in terms of being able to respond to the young people’s requests and their plans (see below) and for the young people. Not only was there more time for the relationships between the artists and young people to develop but the young people were able to make use of the opportunity between the project sessions to reflect upon their work and produce new ideas and work. In the Spacex phase 2.1 project for example, the young people produced a piece of lens based work on their own in between the project sessions.

We left it about a week and then you come back and like I thought of some stuff over the week and then like it’s probably easier to like think of stuff when you’re not actually under pressure like you’ve only got a certain amount of time to think of it in, if you know what I mean. Paul

The contrast between the young people in the phase 2.1 and those in phase 2.2 was quite marked. Notwithstanding this there did not seem to be much difference between young people’s experience of the five-day or two and a half day projects in the second phase.

I would have liked to have been there longer. The first day was sort of ... I was a bit strange by it all. Steve

The problem here was one of expectation particularly the assumption that their gallery experience would mirror their experiences of school based art.

I wouldn’t call this art, I’d call it random pictures. Olivia

I thought it was alright and they did … they try to make it interesting but I do think maybe if we’d spent more time doing art rather than them talking to us and making us do writing it would have been better. Mandy

Nonetheless although the choices on offer were more limited and were more structurally bounded, the young people were able to benefit from the experience.

They made me feel better because I didn’t have to worry about having to try to do my best because I was more free to do what I wanted so I was doing my best in my own way and I didn’t have to worry about if I do something wrong then I’ve done something wrong and I can’t go back to it. It was more like if I do something wrong then I can go and try again. It kind of made me feel better about my work. Paula

**Art and creativity**

Although the question of the relationship between art education and creativity was not a central concern of our research, it was nonetheless an important theme in the conversations with the young people. This was in part because of the way in which the projects were perceived by the artists (particularly in phase 2.2) as a means of developing the capabilities of the young people and of producing ‘better’ artists, and also by the young people...
themselves who could see the obvious benefits of working with the artists in a range of media that they had not previously considered.

Being introduced to a variety of art forms was common across all strands and phases of the project and young people from each group expressed surprise at encountering art forms other than drawing and sculpture. Responses to these different art forms varied across projects and between individuals within each group.

'It's taught me] just to be more open-minded about work and be more imaginative, like since then I would think of other ways of doing stuff. Janet

The young people talked about their ideas of what counts as art being expanded and their art practice changing to include new art forms.

Like different things you can rummage up are also art. Again, in school, it's all very much like different medias, drawing, whereas here it's like when we went to Bedford Square and we did that thing, like we did the hokey-cokey and yeah like that's a form of art. We've never done things like that before. Isabel

It doesn't have to be immediately recognised as art if you know what I mean. Someone might like watch it on a bus or something and think, 'that's not art', but when you think about it, it is. Claire

It's made me look outside the box and thinking about even more types of art, even like a conversation can be a piece of art. Molly

It's like influenced how my school artwork has changed since I started, cos I used to only do drawing and painting cos it's what the teacher said would be best, but now I do loads of different forms of art in my book so it's kind of changed the way I approach art. Joe

Young people also talked about being exposed to different art forms.

'I'm more open towards other things being art. Isabel

I enjoyed it and everything but I don’t know how it linked into art. Joy

[The artist] taught us a different experience. Like here the way we study art here, this was a different way to do it, not like sitting there doing writing. Jack

It made you understand that anything random could be art. Maybe that box could be art. Like me and Charlotte were listening to my iPod in one ear and the other in the other and she was, 'Oh I like that. Go and stand by the mirror.' Some of the stuff was all right and it gave me a different perspective on what people do. People can do completely random things that you just wouldn’t think would be art but they can be classed as art and be put in a gallery. Mandy

The experiences of the artists

Our conversations with the artists focused on their role in developing and running the projects and the ways in which they tried to create opportunities for democratic action and learning within them. Many of their observations and insights echo our findings from the analysis of the interviews with the participating young people. In this section we present the main points of our discussions with them. We do this in relation to the two phases of the work in the South West cluster.

Phase 2.1

The difference between the school context and the project context was a prominent theme in our discussion with the artists, as it was with in our conversations with the participating young people. One of the key challenges for the artists was to create the settings in which young people were going to work. As we mentioned above, we started the phase 2.1 with a workshop in which we explored issues concerning young people’s democratic learning. This helped the artists to develop their projects with an explicit focus on using art to create spaces for democratic action and learning. Creating such spaces was not so much about the physical environment or the artistic dimension of the activities as such – although these were important too – but first and foremost about the quality of processes and relationships. As one of the artists put it, the key challenge was ‘how to facilitate openness’, that is, how to create situations which allowed for the young people to make their own decisions and to do so collectively.
Reflecting upon this aspect of their work all three of the artists felt that they had managed to create such opportunities, although the extent to which they had been able to do this differed. Although this partly had to do with the practicalities of the projects – such as time, location, student participation and motivation – the artists recognised that it took time to build up a relationship with the young people. They were also aware that it took time for the young people to appreciate that they were in a situation that was different from school, with different expectations and different opportunities to take initiative and responsibility. It took time, in other words, to break away from the rules, roles and expectations that structure schooling. This was a challenge for the participating students and, in a sense, a real learning process. Commenting upon this one of the artists explained that she had tried to leave all decisions – from ‘big’ decisions related to the progress of the project to ‘small’ decisions such as about lunch time – to the participating young people. She noticed that, after some time, the young people did indeed manage to take decisions and to take responsibility for their decisions, and that this was a real ‘turning point’ in the project. However, as soon as she brought in a suggestion or task, students would slip back into their more passive student roles. In one of the other projects in phase 2.1 the ‘turning point’ was never really reached and one reason for this was that the project work was linked to students’ GCSE work. As a result, the project activities were still partly ‘framed’ by school expectations. All this reveals that the transition from ‘school’ to ‘gallery’ is not only a transition from one place to another, but also a transition from one set of expectations and behaviours to another set. It is a transition, in other words, which requires ‘unlearning’ and ‘learning’ at the same time.

All three artists argued that one of the most important factors in facilitating this transition was trust: trust in the young people and trust in their capacity to take responsibility for their own actions and activities. As we have indicated, the issue of trust was an issue that also came to the fore in our interviews with the participating young people. When we asked the artists to summarise what was important in their work with the young people, this is what they said: ‘trust, letting go, problem solving’, ‘letting go, trust, relationships, space’ and ‘trust, learning to express differently’.

One of our important findings here was that the young people were not the only ones who needed to redefine their expectations and get used to different roles and relationships. The artists also had to work on how they wanted to relate to and work with the young people. Although all were clear that their position was not that of a teacher, it was not easy to get completely away from that position. As one of the artists put it, the teacher role was ‘difficult to evade’. When asked how the artists understood their own roles in the project, they did see themselves more as facilitators than as teachers. However, as one of them said, in order to be able to create relationships based on trust, it was important for the artists not simply to act as a facilitator of processes but actually to ‘embody’ a different way of being and relating. The ambition, as she put it, was to ‘humanise’ the interaction with the young people and part of this was about such down-to-earth things like providing drinks and snacks.

All three artists emphasised the importance of process and action, rather than of product and output. The fact that the projects were art based was definitely important here not least because this brought openness into the activities themselves, and allowed for reflection and decision-making throughout the process. The artwork did give the activities focus and direction, and also allowed the young people to work experientially and with their imagination. As one of the artists put it, the artwork made it possible for the young people to ‘come out of their shell’.

When asked whether the young people had become better citizens as result of their participation in the projects, their answers were mixed. One of the artists felt that the project had helped to draw out qualities within the young people. It had, in other words, provided them with a space for action that allowed for different qualities to surface. One of the other artists felt that the project had allowed the participating young people to have more ownership over their activities and actions and argued that this was an important learning experience for them. Whereas it would be unrealistic to expect a direct link between participation and young people’s democratic citizenship, the artists did feel that the projects had allowed the young people to experience different ways of being and acting, ways that relied more on them taking responsibility for their actions, than was the case in other aspects of their lives, most prominently compared to their everyday lives in school.
Phase 2.2
After the second round of projects we held a meeting with three of the artists who had been involved in leading the projects. Two of them had also been involved in the first phase and therefore were able to compare between the work in the first and second phases. There were two important differences between phase 2.1 and 2.2. Firstly we did not have a project-wide workshop to focus on issues concerning young people's democratic learning. A second important difference was that the projects in phase 2.2 ran over a much shorter period of time. One consequence was that the projects in phase 2.2 were slightly more output orientated than the projects in phase 2.1. For some of the artists who had also worked in the first phase this created a tension. However, it also created some interesting research opportunities particularly in relation to questions about product and process, and the issue of time.

The artists approached their projects differently. One of them aimed specifically to create a space for young people in which they could experience different relationships and different ways of acting and being; a space, moreover, where young people could make their own choices and decisions. The aesthetic dimension, the art project, was a way to make such a process possible, but it was the quality of the processes and relationships that counted for her, much more than the aesthetic quality of the outcomes. The outcomes were probably not ‘fantastic’ as pieces of art, but the artist did emphasise that they were important to the young people because they ‘owned’ them. This suggests that a focus on the democratic potential of artistic processes does not necessarily produce high quality art, but it can produce highly significant democratic learning experiences.

In one of the other projects the focus was more strongly on the production of a piece of art, albeit that the exhibition which provided the context for this had a clear political theme. Within the structures provided and in relation to the production of a clear ‘output’ there was scope for democratic decision-making and for taking responsibility and ownership – but the parameters of the activities were less open and more clearly focused on the production of an art product. The artist felt that it was important to work in this way because, as he put it, ‘if you leave it to their decisions, then the art dimension remains too open.’ This does not mean that a focus on art and the product of art makes democratic action and decision-making impossible. One important aspect of the creation of art has to do with making judgements about the process and the product, and one of the key questions is what the democratic potential of such judgements is or can be.

In one of the groups the decision-making was more focused on the processes than on the aesthetic outcomes. Here, we could say, the democratic potential of aesthetic judgement was not explored. In one of the other groups there was a strong focus on making judgements about the artistic aspects of the work, but it was clear that engaging in such judgements does not necessarily happen in a democratic way. Quite often when the artist asked the group for a judgement and decision about how to proceed, the group went with the first suggestion that was made and did not really engage with any collective decision-making and the complexities of such processes. The key question here is to what extent artists can and should challenge such processes. One of the artists not only felt strongly that this is crucial for democratic learning but also raised the important point that such challenging has to be done in a sustainable way, in a way that shows respect for different viewpoints as well. ‘Change’, as she put it, ‘happens in small steps’ and ‘ownership of change takes time.’

The time dimension was also relevant in another way. There were conflicts in the phase 2.2 projects with challenging behaviour from students that required the artists to intervene and set boundaries for what was acceptable. What this reveals, particularly when compared to the phase 2.1 projects, is that to establish a different kind of relationship with young people and to change their expectations and behaviours takes time – and in the second phase of the project there just wasn’t enough time to engage in such processes of learning and change. The phase 2.2 projects, as one of the artists who had been involved in both phases put it, ‘was very rushed’. This was not a problem for those projects that had a clear structure and focus on the production of a piece of art, it was more of a problem where the young people were given more freedom and more influence on the processes, as at least initially they found it difficult to deal with this. If it is the case that the democratic potential of gallery work can only be fully appreciated if all the parties, artists and young people, have the time to build up different relationships –
relationships of trust and openness – than it is clear that the second set of projects was less successful in utilising the democratic potential of gallery education than the first. Time for learning and change is the critical issue here.

This is not to suggest that the projects in phase 2.2 were without significance. As we have documented in our analysis of the student interviews, the students felt that they learned a lot – although the learning was more explicitly connected to the content of some of the projects than to its form. The artists learned important things as well. One thing that became clear for one of the artists is that if the ambition is to utilise the democratic potential of gallery work, then what matters most is what she referred to as ‘the art of democratic decision-making.’ ‘This, as she put it, is “the real art” and gallery work has the potential to practise this art if there is sufficient attention to the democratic dimension of processes. If this is absent then there is the risk that gallery work with young people becomes just another form of teaching. One of the artists clearly felt that this is not how she would want to work with young people in gallery settings. Or as she put it: “I should stop doing this; I want to be an artist, not a teacher.” To utilise the potential for democratic action and learning in the context of gallery work therefore not only depends on the quality of relationships and processes and the way in which young people can develop a different identity and way of being; it also is strongly related with the ways in which artists can be there as artists, involved in artistic processes and exploring the democratic potential of such processes.

Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of the research has been to explore the potential for democratic learning in projects in which young people work with artists in gallery contexts. Contemporary gallery education seeks to open up a complex, conceptual, social and aesthetic world in which making art consists of a series of negotiations and internal and external processes which aim to provide opportunities for participation and engagement that are at the very same time aesthetic and democratic in their potential. Gallery education is not about teaching art to young people but about doing art with young people and it is precisely because of this that gallery education has the potential for democratic action and learning. This is a process of exploration and experimentation which requires skilful ‘navigation’ from the artists.

A positive outcome of the research is that artist-led projects with young people do indeed have the potential for democratic action, being and learning – as is evidenced both by the young people’s experiences and the artists’ accounts. What is most important in this is the quality of processes and relationships and a crucial factor in this regard is trust. When artists are able to relate to young people on the basis of trust and when young people are able to experience that they are trusted, the dynamics of the process begin to change and young people begin to move to a position where they can take responsibility for and ownership of their actions and activities. This, as the research has shown, is a process that takes time, also because young people need to get used to working with adults in a way that is not structured by the power relationships and expectations that structure their schooling. ‘Space’, ‘time’, ‘relationships’ and ‘trust’ are therefore crucial notions in understanding the dynamics of democratic learning in gallery education.

Another important aspect of democratic action and learning is that of decision-making. The research indicates that art – and particularly art projects that are fairly open with regard to their direction and outcome – requires continuous judgement and decision-making, both with regard to processes and outcomes. It was particularly when judgements and decisions were made collectively and when young people encountered a multiplicity of views and preferences that the projects started to model the complexities and characteristics of democratic practices and processes. Whereas some young people followed their own trajectory without much interference from others, we have seen many examples where young people were challenged either by the artists or by other young people to engage in collective decision-making, thus having to deal with the realities of judgement and action-in-plurality.

Our discussions with the artists helped us to see that the potential for democratic action, being and learning of artist-led work in galleries crucially depends on the ways in which artists are able to embody the values of democratic process and decision-making. They showed, in other words, that democracy is not something that can simply be taught in a gallery context, but artist-led work in gallery contexts can definitely provide opportunities that are conducive for young people’s democratic learning. The research has helped to show which dimensions
and factors matter in utilising this potential. The research has also shown that creating opportunities for democratic action, being and learning in gallery projects is not a precise science but can itself best be understood as an art. To this we may well refer to as ‘the art of democracy’.

We wish to conclude, therefore, with the following research-based recommendations:

• Recognise that work with young people in gallery contexts can include elements that encourage their democratic learning
• Recognise that this requires a sustained effort by artists to give young people control over their actions and activities
• Encourage young people to make decisions in a transparent, shared and inclusive way
• Respect and trust the views of young people and their capacities for collaboration and collective decision-making
• Recognise the importance of artists in promoting and modelling democratic decision-making processes
• Allow young people space and time to learn from their participation

References


Participants

The enquire consortium
Since 2004 enquire has developed a consortium of gallery educators, curators, artists, teachers, youth leaders and researchers across seven regions of England who have contributed a great deal of enthusiasm, commitment, expertise and hard work to the programme. This consortium has enabled over 7,360 children and young people to enjoy and learn through a wide range of projects with diverse contemporary art and artists. Their curiosity, creativity and insights have been fundamental to enquire and an inspiration. The DCMS, DCSF, Arts Council England and engage are grateful to everyone who made the programme an exciting learning experience for all involved.

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Liz Crump
Fiona Cummings
Ula Dajerling
Kath Davidson
Becky Davies
Karen Davies
Kate Day
Johnny De Veras
Jim Dearden
Stephen Devine
Susan Diab
Sophia Diamantopoulou
Claire Dixon
Paul Dixon
Sara Domville-Maguire
Ayon Donald
Jo Donegan
Godfried Donkor
Wendy Dowling
Amanda Draper
Marisa Draper
Sandra Drew
Iain Drummond
Nisha Duggal
Caroline Dunbar
Lindsay Duncanson
Christopher Dunleavy
Susy Dunne
Mel Dymond
Claire Eddison
Christina Edgren-Carter
Elizabeth Edmondson
Katie Edwards
Tim Edwards
Vicky Elliot
Jane Fairhurst
Liz Falconbridge
Saj Fareed
Sue Feighery
Dan Fentiman
Chris Finn
Tessa Fitzjohn
Sarah Fletcher
Alice Flight
Sarah Florence-Nash
Pete Flowers
Sue Flowers
Participants

David Priestly
Emily Pringle
Kate Pritchard
Verity Pulford
Sam Pull
William Pym
Sheridan Quigley
James Quinn
John Quinn
Patricia Ramsden
David Rees
Marina Rees
Hannah Reeves
Gareth Reilly
Vivienne Reiss
Pauline Rice
Kelly Richardson
Emma Rigby
Ceri Roberts
Ian Roberts
Mandy Roberts
Simon Robertshaw
Michaela Ross
Abi Russell
Allie Rutherford
Helen Sargeant
Dan Saul
Caroline Saunders
Gigi Scaria
Guy Schofield
Naomi Scott
John Sealey
Judy Sebbä
Peter Sek
Veronica Sekules
Laura Sillars
Marijho Silvanao
SinCru
Sarah Singh
Tanya Skillen
Amy Smith
Emma Smith
Jackie Smith
Nicola Smith
Nicola Spen
Sue Stamper
Shaun Stanbury
Cecilia Stenbom
Colin Stevens
Vicky Stevens
Bryan Stich
Jennifer Stoddart
Mary Stuart
Janet Summerton
Claire Summerville
Karen Sunderland
Grace Surman
Louise Sutherland
Kate Sweeney
Steve Symons
Robin Tarbet
Dianne Taylor
Jean Taylor
Karen Taylor
Lindsay Taylor
Louise Taylor
Emma Thomas
Judy Thomas
Katherine Thomas
Mel Thompson
Nia Thorpe
Miles Thurlow
Anna Townley
Fernando Traverso
Natalie Trimby
Jane Trowell
Anna Turnbull
Colin Turnbull
Paula Turner
Leanne Turvey
Heather Tweed
George Unsworth
Matthew Walmsley
Alie Walton
Natalie Walton
Brian Ward
Emily Ward
Jacqueline Watson
Julie Watson
Jude Watt
Mary Watts
Len Wellings
Stephen Welsh
Helen Wewiora
Andrew White
Charlotte White
Chris Whitehead
Liz Whitehead
Sam Whitehead
Ruth Whiteside
Angharad Williams
Lynne Williams
Tamsin Williams
Jackie Wills
Daniel Wilson
David Wilson
Gemma Winward
Vanessa Wolfe
Leander Wolshenholme
Shirley-Anne Wood
Peter Woodage
Simon Woolham
Ila Wooller
Matt Wootton
Dawn Worthington
Jan Wright
Lesley Young
engage promotes access to, enjoyment and understanding of the visual arts through ‘gallery education’ – projects and programmes which help schoolchildren and the wider community become confident in their understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts and galleries. It is a membership organisation that represents gallery, art and education professionals in the UK and in fifteen countries worldwide. wwwengage.org

engage supports gallery education through:

Professional development: training opportunities to promote good practice, and helps practitioners pursue careers in gallery education.

Projects and Programmes: currently projects include:

- *Interpretations* wwwengage.org/projects/interpretations.aspx, engage Scotland programme investigating the role of interpretation in breaking down barriers to access to contemporary visual art

- *engage in the Foundation Phase* wwwengage.org/projects/foundation_phase.aspx, engage Cymru programme exploring the contribution that galleries and artists can make to the new Foundation Phase curriculum in Wales

- *Watch this Space* wwwengage.org/projects/watchthisspace.aspx, training and professional development for teachers and gallery educators with the aim of developing new links, skills and knowledge.

- *Explore* www.exploregalleries.org, in association with Shape. Eight galleries in England and Wales focusing on disabled and deaf people as audiences, participants and artists.

Advocacy: to build wider recognition of the potential of gallery education, and to influence policies and resourcing. engage is currently working with Skillset, Creative and Cultural Skills and with Ofsted.

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