



RENAISSANCE
NORTH WEST



MLA North West, MLA and Renaissance North West

Review of Museum, Library and Archive
Activity with Children and Young People

Final Report

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1 Executive Summary

Introduction

In December 2005, the Burns Owens Partnership (BOP) was contracted to undertake a review of museum, library and archive activity with children and young People, by MLA North West, MLA and Renaissance North West.

The literature review sets out the main strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the evidence base against current policy for children and young people, and offers a series of recommendations on how the evidence base might be improved. The report also identifies a need for the sector to engage more fully with the main service providers for children and young people, in terms of establishing better contacts, relationships and partnerships. It is only through a combination of improving both evidence and engagement that the sector will be in a position to help *shape* policy regarding children and young people.

The report makes recommendations on how to improve engagement with other public sector partners, particularly within the North West region. The first step of this process is to understand and clarify what the 'offer' is that museums, libraries and archives can make towards some of the most commonly defined goals within children and young people's policy. The report develops a model of the offer and maps this in relation to children and young people's policy.

Policy context for children and young people

The policy environment related to children and young people in England is currently going through the biggest change in a generation. At the heart of this is the Every Child Matters (ECM) framework and allied Youth Matters (YM) agenda.

- ECM focuses on five key outcomes for children and young people: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution; and Achieve Economic Well Being.
- In essence it is an outcome-based planning and evaluation framework for use by a range of partners to ensure co-ordination and integration of their service planning processes.
- Youth Matters differs in that it does contain new national policy proposals for young people; namely to provide 'something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to'.
- However, the YM programme will still be assessed within the five outcomes framework of ECM, and this reflects the wider adoption of the framework across government to measure outcomes for children and young people in, for example, Local Area Agreements (LAAs).
- ECM and YM will be delivered by Children's Trusts, multi-agency bodies consisting of a range of core (statutory) and wider

(discretionary) partners, which offer a significant degree of local autonomy.

- In addition to the cross-departmental ECM agenda, there are a number of DfES-specific policies which have an immediate relevance for the activities that museums, libraries and archives engage in with children and young people, principally: SureStart, Family Learning, and Extended Schools.
- ECM and the relevant DfES policies exemplify the trend towards increasing multi-agency working in improving public services and tackling disadvantage. This trend represents both an **opportunity** and a **threat** for museums, libraries and archives.
- The opportunity arises from the fact that new forms of local governance relevant to children and young people's policy require local authorities to actively involve a range of partners. This relates specifically to Children's Trusts, but also to more generic processes such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs).
- Local authorities have a degree of flexibility and autonomy in choosing who to involve in the partnership process and how outcomes are delivered. In theory, this is an opportunity for the contribution of museums, libraries and archives' to a range of social agendas to be recognised and integrated with a number of policy structures and processes – at the local level.
- The threat arises from the fact that, in practice, the museum, library and archive sector to date has often found it difficult to participate in these structures and processes at the local level. Equally, the museum, library and archive domains (and culture more generally) have had little say in the development of these overarching processes and frameworks at a central government level.
- In summary, despite the increasing emphasis on multi-agency working within government, at present cultural sector bodies too often seem not to register on the partnership 'radar' of other service providers.
- Improving relationships and partnership working with other service providers is therefore crucial in gaining greater credit, profile and influence within policy making for children and young people.

National literature review

The literature review is a narrative literature review, designed to inform policy, provide evidence where possible to support advocacy material, and identify major gaps in the existing literature. The type of literature consulted includes consultancy reports, project evaluations and 'grey literature', in addition to academic literature from a range of specialist research centres and relevant journal publications.

In addition to the consultants' knowledge of the literature, interviewees that were consulted during the research were asked to provide references to key material. These were particularly helpful in tracking down international and regional studies, though there are important policy

differences between the UK and other countries, which mean that the review concentrates on UK material.

The literature was reviewed against the five ECM outcomes and the wider policy landscape for children and young people. The review finds that it is easier to make a case for how the sector makes an *holistic* contribution to improving the life chances of children and young people, rather than against the five separate ECM outcomes. For this reason, the literature review does not consider evidence directly against the ECM indicators or 'legislative judgments' that sit beneath the five outcomes within the hierarchy of the ECM framework.

Overall, the evidence base in relation to ECM is strongest when it demonstrates the immediate effects of children and young people's interaction with the sector, principally in terms of enjoyment and learning outcomes – particularly of life skills/non-cognitive skills, but also related specifically to literacy.

ECM: Enjoy and Achieve

The evidence of the impact of museum, library and archive activities with children and young people is strongest for this ECM outcome.

- There is strong evidence from the literature that museums, libraries and archives are viewed as enjoyable **recreational** activities by both children and young people, and by intermediaries such as teachers or parents.
- As well as its intrinsic importance, a range of research studies have established positive links between enjoyment, learning and academic success.
- In addition to enjoyment, teachers in the National/Regional Museums Partnerships Programme also report that interaction with museums, libraries and archives can help to deliver **curriculum-based outcomes** (which form many of the 'Enjoy and Achieve' outcome indicators). This is echoed by pupils from the same study that report that they may get improved marks from having engaged in work with museums, libraries and archives.
- However, aside from individuals' perceptions of change, the literature does not show that engagement with museums, libraries and archives has a positive effect on academic attainment as measured through formal assessment.
- In part, this is due to a general lack of longitudinal research in this area, which means that it cannot be demonstrated either positively or negatively.
- Where longitudinal work does exist in this area it is in relation to early years work in public libraries through the Bookstart evaluation, which is considered below.

ECM: Make a Positive Contribution

- This ECM outcome covers a range of quite specific and 'directed' activities – i.e. activities that focus on encouraging young people to get involved in activities that result in 'positive' social and economic externalities (volunteering, becoming an entrepreneur), while avoiding those with negative social and economic externalities (crime).
- Thus evidence related to taking part in more general cultural/social activities, that are less 'directed' than these specific activities and behaviours, falls under the 'Enjoy and Achieve' outcome instead.
- Relatedly, there appears to be little national research that looks at the impact of a range of activities that museums, libraries and archives provide that could be considered under this category of 'positive activities' (e.g. volunteering, crime reduction etc).
- However, evaluation of Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP), a cross-departmental national programme run by the DfES in which public libraries are involved, does suggest that **participation** in the programme of 'developmental and diversionary activities' has had positive impacts on learning and some aspects of social capital formation.

ECM: Be Healthy

- There is only the beginnings of an evidence base relating to the contribution that museums, libraries and archives make to health and wellbeing, and children and young people are not well represented within even this small body of literature.
- In part, this absence seems to stem from the fact that research on most activities for children and young people within the sector starts from an educational/learning perspective.
- Therefore even in instances where there might be evidence of positive health outcomes, for instance in libraries' early years work, researchers choose instead to focus on learning outcomes (in this case, language acquisition and literacy).
- This means that at present it is only really possible to infer health outcomes on this evidence (e.g. there is evidence that improved cognitive skills, such as literacy, are key to mental and emotional health).

ECM: Achieve Economic Well Being

Evidence that relates to museums, libraries and archives contribution to learning and skills development is relevant to this ECM outcome, given its strong focus on educational progression and employability.

- There is little evidence on the *direct* link between skills acquired by young people's interaction with museums, libraries and archives and economic outcomes.
- In part, this is simply a factor of time, in that it is difficult to track how effects on children and young people translate into economic outcomes in the labour market in later life.
- But there are also difficulties that are more specific to the sector, principally that economic outcomes, such as business start-ups or even educational progression, are likely to be externalities of museums, libraries and archives activities, rather than the original intention and purpose.
- However, in relation to positive economic externalities, recent research is suggestive of an important link between the kinds of **non-cognitive or 'life' skills** that often arise from activities in museums, libraries and archives, and their value in the labour market.
- Research from the US National Bureau of Economic Research argues that too much emphasis has been placed on academic or cognitive skills as employers value attitudinal traits, such as dependability and stability, as much as or more than cognitive skills, and that these traits may be more important in determining personal success in the long term.

ECM: Stay Safe

Of all the ECM outcomes, 'Stay Safe' is the outcome that most reflects the roots of the 'change for children' programme in services for vulnerable children and young people.

- Stay safe is thus concerned with statutory duties for ensuring that services for children and young people (principally care services and schools) prevent harm to children and young people.
- It is therefore fundamentally not about influencing the attitudes and behaviour of children and young people themselves to 'Stay Safe' (these fall under 'Make a Positive Contribution') and as such, there is very little that the museums, libraries and archives sector can contribute to this ECM outcome, other than that they have a duty to be safe places for children and young people.

Youth Matters

- Museums, libraries and archives often find it challenging to attract and engage with young people, and the literature reflects this in terms of a lack of real evidence of impact with this age group.
- But there is increasing evidence of practice of working with young people in the sector, including a number of national programmes specifically designed to improve engagement with this age group.
- There is a strong overlap between evidence that would be covered under Youth Matters and also under the 'Make a Positive Contribution' ECM outcome, as Youth Matters is principally concerned with providing 'developmental and diversionary activities' for young people.
- A range of recent initiatives has been established to try and improve museums, libraries and archives' engagement with, and services for, young people.
- These initiatives require the sector to adopt a significantly different approach to that taken when working with younger children, and outreach work and partnership with other agencies are seen by many as the key to working with this age group.

DfES: Early Years And Family Learning

There is a large body of literature that attests to the importance of early intervention in education to combat social exclusion.

- Strong research evidence shows that pre-school language and literacy experiences are accurate predictors of later educational attainment.
- Public libraries have developed a near universal offer of pre-school **language and literacy** activities, based around the Bookstart book-giving programme and participatory activities for toddlers and their parents and carers, such as singing nursery rhymes (Rhyme Time) and reading stories (Storytime).
- A longitudinal study of Bookstart has shown that on both teacher assessment measures and pupil test results, children that had benefited from Bookstart did better than the control group.
- The distinction is most pronounced in English, but it was also found in other subjects, leading the researchers to hypothesise that it is the attention and concentration that the child learns that is the key skill as this is a crucial element of **learning the ability to learn**.
- Similar findings that reinforce the link between museums, libraries and archives activities and improvements in educational indicators within pre-school children have also been found in evaluation of the Peers Early Education Partnerships (PEEPs).
- Other than early intervention, the strongest predictor of literacy and language development is the support provided in the home by parents and carers. This is because the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents affects children, particular in early years.

- This has led to a raft of government and government-backed policies on 'family learning', and the sector is involved in delivering many of these, though as yet there is little research on the specific contribution that museums, libraries and archives can make in these settings.

DfES: Extended Schools and Study Support

Extended Schools is a developing policy area within the UK and one in which museums, libraries and archives are likely to play an important role. However, its newness means that there is little outcome-based research on Extended Schools. However, Study Support, which is one of the key elements within the Extended Schools concept, has been the subject of more research.

In particular, a large-scale research study originally undertaken by the Quality in Education Centre at the University of Strathclyde for the DfEE concluded that out-of-hours school learning, including cultural activities, could have significant and substantial effects on academic achievements, even where the activities (such as sport or arts) were not directly curriculum-related.

- Also, research has been conducted internationally on extra-curricular activities in museums, libraries and archives, much of which is relevant to the concept of Extended Schools.
- Research has focused on the effect of these extra curricular activities on educational attainment. Some studies report that involvement in specifically cultural extra curricular activities is paramount in raising attainment, but these findings are contested by other researchers.
- Others conclude that the use of external resources (such as museums, libraries and archives) in out-of-hours settings is most important in disadvantaged areas, as they can bridge the gap in achievement related to differences in the home environment.

Limitations and gaps in the evidence base nationally

Despite the growing volume of literature on the social and educational impact of museums, libraries and archives, serious limitations and gaps in the evidence base remain. In particular:

- very little longitudinal work
- a lack of baselines against which to measure change
- very few studies make use of control groups
- little research that analyses in detail the specific nature of the learning that takes place in museums, libraries and archives contexts
- little work within museum education research on learning through participation in programmes, workshops or via websites, compared with museum visits

- there appears at times to be a discrepancy between children and young people's stated intentions or impressions and their behaviours, which is unexplored in the research
- there is little research evidence that provides an understanding of the degree of participation that is required to produce demonstrable effects, beyond the observation that it is generally associated with habitual or prolonged use.

Conclusions and recommendations

The emphasis on partnership working and holistic service delivery in ECM and YM means that there is a major opportunity for museums, libraries and archives to become involved in developing integrated service provision for one of their major constituencies: children and young people.

This is an opportunity that needs to be grasped by museums, libraries and archives. Articulating (and improving) the evidence base regarding museums, libraries and archives' activities for children and young people is a key part of realising this opportunity.

Improving the evidence base

There are a number of ways in which the MLA – as the sector lead body – can act at national and regional level to address some of the shortcomings and limitations of the evidence base.

- **At local/regional level.** The Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) have added most value to practitioners' and institutions' work where they were supported by regional agencies and/or through peer learning. MLA's subsequent idea to facilitate regional 'learning circles' to support further use of the GLOs could provide the kind of forum through which improved practice and skills for undertaking more general research and evaluation could be delivered.
- **At national level.** MLA has a specific remit here to develop evidence of the impact or outcomes of activities within museums, libraries and archives. There are a number of ways in which this could be undertaken in relation to children and young people.
 - **Museums, libraries and archives' sector development programmes** such as Renaissance in the Regions and Framework for the Future are national in scope, longitudinal in duration and have some discretionary expenditure. This means that within the sector, they are the best place from which the more fundamental research and evaluation that is required to demonstrate the outcomes of the sector can be resourced and overseen.
 - **Working with partners outside the sector.** MLA should investigate the possibilities for joint working with partners from outside the museums, libraries and archives sector to address the need for more fundamental and longer term research. In particular, this should involve the UK's higher education community.

Both of these recommendations could apply as across the board recommendations for MLA in terms of its overall role in improving the evidence base for the sector. Specific recommendations for priority areas for children and young people that emerge from the present review include the following:

- **Early years.** The Bookstart evaluation shows the positive impact of the programme on both cognitive and non-cognitive skill development in early years. However, there are some limitations to the existing research and other components of public libraries' early years work that have not been researched at all, despite having become close to a universal offer provided by libraries. There are therefore a range of possible research and evaluation options that MLA should consider commissioning to more thoroughly demonstrate the positive contribution that the sector makes to pre-school language, literacy and health.
- **Family learning.** The role of museums, libraries and archives in family learning is under researched. In particular, the sector needs to identify what are the distinctive benefits that museums, libraries and archives can offer as resources for family learning programmes.
- **Curriculum support.** There are gaps in the evidence base related to both the scale and scope of service provision in this area, as well as the impact that these activities have on longer term educational attainment.
- **Recreation and participation.** Museums, libraries and archives provide enjoyable experiences for children and young people – though too often, immediate expressions of enjoyment do not translate into repeat visits/participation. Also, the weight of evidence in this area currently relates more strongly to children than young people. But it is specifically in relation to providing 'places to go' and 'things to do' for young people that the sector will have to evidence its potential contribution to Youth Matters in the immediate future.

Similarly, there is a gap in the evidence base regarding the role of young people's volunteering in the sector, and how young people are involved in the design of museum, library and archive services. In short, MLA needs to consider how it can best position the sector across the board in relation to the recently announced Youth Matters proposals, including what this means for improving the evidence base.

- **Non-cognitive skills.** The evidence related to museums, libraries and archives' activities for children and young people often refers to the development of what are variously termed 'emotional and social development', 'non-cognitive skills', 'emotional intelligence', 'social learning', 'self confidence' and 'life skills'. If these attributes are pivotal to understanding how the intrinsic benefits that museums, libraries and archives provide for children and young people relate to extrinsic benefits, then the sector would be better served by a more common vocabulary and/or a clearer understanding of the distinctions between one term and another, and how each of these facets of human capital map onto a number of distinct extrinsic benefits (e.g. employability or better mental health).

Improving engagement with local and regional partners

The move towards multi-agency working that is exemplified in the ECM programme and a number of current DfES policies means that there is a major opportunity for the museum, library and archive sector to become more involved in joint working for delivering services and activities for children and young people.

This engagement must be proactive, as it will not happen as a matter of due course. Museums, libraries and archives are not core partners within Children's Trusts, have no legislative duties with regard to children and young people, and are therefore not automatically present within the regime of inspection and performance management developed for ECM.

Museums, libraries and archives also need to be realistic about this engagement. The ECM/YM agenda is led by the main providers of services such as schools and the health service, as well as the agencies that deal with vulnerable young people, such as criminal justice and social care. Cultural agencies have a particular offer to make here; but they should not attempt to address the whole ECM agenda.

The Offer

The 'offer' developed in this report focuses on where museums, libraries and archives' particular strengths lie. The components of the offer are:

1. Language acquisition and the ability to learn
2. Literacy development
3. Curriculum support
4. Recreation
5. Participation
6. Non-cognitive skills development
7. Personalised learning provision

These elements contribute to the wider objectives of policy for children and young people at local, regional and national level. The offer is intended to help the sector distil and articulate the range of activities and the kinds of outcomes that it can offer for children and young people, in a language – and with reference to a policy environment – that other public sector partners can identify with. The overall goal of this study is to review the evidence with a view to helping to support museums, libraries and archives to engage with other partners, and to ensure that the sector achieves the prominence it deserves within the changing landscape of children's and young people's services.

While policy for children and young people is set centrally, however, it is important to note that its implementation varies at both the local and regional level. The full research report which follows illustrates how this operates within one region, the North West. It then makes recommendations for how MLA North West together with other sector partners, such as Renaissance North West and Arts Council North West, can improve their joint working within this specific, North West policy

context. Replicating this work in another region would require a similar process of detailed organisational/policy mapping and engagement to be undertaken.

2 Introduction

In December 2005, the Burns Owens Partnership (BOP) was contracted to undertake a review of museum, library and archive activity with children and young People. The sponsors for the research are MLA North West, MLA and Renaissance North West. The Northwest Culture Observatory was also a member of the project's Steering Group.

Following an inception and scoping meeting between the Steering Group and BOP, it was agreed that the review should concentrate on providing:

- a tool to advocate for the sector at national level, particularly in relation to the 2008 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR)
- a robust evidence base at regional level that supports MLA North West's advocacy strategy, in a form that can be updated and added to as an ongoing resource
- a pilot that can inform other regional agencies of the MLA Partnership's work in the area of children and young people
- a pilot for developing a North West regional evidence base for culture that can be communicated to other cultural stakeholders in the region (e.g. within the arts), to inform a more cohesive collation of evidence relating to children and young people
- evidence that will inform practice.

The review consisted of a narrative literature review, predominantly regional (the North West region) and national (England) in scope, though supplemented with insights from notable international research as and where appropriate. The literature review examines the impact of museum, library and archive activity with children and young people in light of the most significant and relevant current policies for children and young people, particularly the Every Child Matters (ECM) 'programme of change for children'.

In addition to desk research, the review also involved consultation at both regional and national level. This encompassed:

- key stakeholders and policy makers in the North West region responsible for implementing national policy for children and young people
- the views of MLA North West's strategic partners in the region
- national agencies and organisations involved in (i) culture and (ii) developing and delivering policy for children and young people.

The consultation was designed to provide:

- practical recommendations for MLA North West and its sector partners on how to engage with the emerging policy landscape for children and young people

- a 'reality check' of the emerging findings from the literature review, and opportunities to feed in additional suggestions for literature and research to be incorporated within the review.

Further information on the methodology is provided in sections 4 and 10 below.

The literature review sets out the main strengths, weaknesses and gaps in the evidence base against current policy for children and young people, and offers a series of recommendations on how this might be improved. Lastly, the report also offers recommendations on how museums, libraries and archives can improve their engagement with other service providers for children and young people. The first step of this process is to understand the 'offer' that museums, libraries and archives can make towards some of the most commonly defined goals within children's and young people's policy.

3 Context: national summary of policy for children and young people

This section provides a detailed summary of the national policy context relating to children and young people. It includes an overview of Every Child Matters, Youth Matters, Early Years and Family Learning and Extended Schools, as well as information about local governance arrangements and performance management. The purpose of this section is to provide background information that informs the sections that follow.

3.1 Every Child Matters Overview

The policy environment related to children and young people in England is currently going through the biggest change in a generation. At the heart of this transformation in the organisation and delivery of services for children and young people is the Every Child Matters (ECM) framework. ECM was first published as a Green Paper in 2003 alongside the government's formal response to the Laming Report into the tragic death of Victoria Climbié. The Green Paper was followed a year later by the Children Act 2004 that provides the legislative spine for the new duties, governance arrangements and service obligations related to children and young people.

The failings of service providers to co-operate and exchange information that were identified by the Climbié Inquiry has had a major bearing on the reorganisation process. The ECM framework focuses on five key outcomes for children and young people:

1. **Be Healthy:** conceived in broad, holistic terms to include mental and emotional health and ensuring that children and young people lead healthy lifestyles
2. **Stay Safe:** ensuring that children and young people are looked after and safe at home; are not bullied or discriminated against in school; and are generally safe from crime and anti-social behaviour
3. **Enjoy and Achieve:** this outcome has a strong focus on schooling (being prepared for, attending and attaining at school), but also focuses on personal and social development and the enjoyment of recreation (including culture and sport)
4. **Make a Positive Contribution:** children and young people should engage in activities with wider social and economic 'goods' (e.g. volunteering, getting involved in local decision-making, becoming entrepreneurial), while avoiding those that weaken and damage the social fabric (e.g. offending)
5. **Achieve Economic Well-Being:** ensuring that children and young people progress to further education, training or employment after leaving school – and enjoy good housing and access to transport

The intention is that this 'user centred' approach will help to combat the difficulties that can arise when different service providers operate within

their own 'silos'. ECM, then, is less concerned with new or restructured funding streams, than about binding key partners to 'joined-up' service delivery and information exchange through legislative and statutory responsibilities, focused upon the five outcomes.

Among the major institutional and governance innovations ushered in by the Children Act 2004 are:

- the establishment of a Children's Commissioner for England to champion the views and interests of children and young people
- the duty placed on each local authority to develop a single Children and Young People Plan
- the establishment of Children's Trusts – the multi-agency bodies designed to deliver ECM and the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2004) at a local level.

Local Children and Young People Plans will be live from April 2006 in all top tier authorities¹. Similarly, building on the 35 Children's Trusts Pathfinders established in 2003 (three of which are in the North West: Trafford, Bolton and Blackburn) all top tier local authorities are required to have Children's Trusts in place by 2008 (HM Government, 2004).

Partners in Children's Trusts

In terms of the partners involved with Children's Trusts, there are core partners whose role is mandatory and framed by a legal duty to work together with the Children's Services Authority:

- district council (in two tier authorities)
- police authority and the chief officer of police
- local probation board
- Youth Offending Team
- Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and Primary Care Trust (PCT)
- Connexions
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

In addition, local authorities are also encouraged to work with a much 'wider group of partners ... including voluntary youth organisations, community organisations, schools, GPs and other service providers' (National Youth Agency/LGA, 2005).

As this group of core and wider partners indicates, ECM and the structure of Children's Trusts very much reflect their origins in 'the convergence of two major streams of government child and family policy' (UEA, 2004):

¹ The only exceptions to this are the top tier authorities that are rated as 'excellent' authorities through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process. This is part of a general move within local government performance management to reward good and excellent performance with greater autonomy. Excellent authorities would, however, still be required to demonstrate how they are providing joined-up delivery for children and young people.

- the protection of children and young people's welfare and the provision of services that target vulnerable children, young people and families; and
- the promotion of children and young people's well-being and the provision of universal and preventative services, with roots in a range of area-based initiatives, special grant regimes and local change programmes.

Thus, despite the involvement of bodies such as the LSC and Connexions, the agenda is led by the main providers of services to vulnerable children and young people: care services, health, education, and criminal justice. There is, then, a degree to which 'Every Child Matters' is a somewhat titular description for the framework, as 'at risk' children and young people, and those with Special Educational Needs and disabilities, remain a major focus within ECM and the allied Youth Matters (YM) framework for young people. Similarly, the fifth thematic outcome of 'economic well-being' has been accorded a lower priority across the Children's Trusts Pathfinders than the other four outcomes, which are all social policy-oriented (UEA, 2004).

Summary

In summary, ECM, YM and Children's Trusts are **defined by central government but flexibility does exist at the local level** in terms of:

- institutional arrangements – flexibility to involve wider partners beyond the core partners
- delivery – most commonly delivery remains the province of individual service providers working co-operatively to a single action plan and common outcomes. However service providers can also pool budgets within a Children's Trust, this can then act as the vehicle through which service provision is organised
- priority setting, and evidencing progress towards these priorities – albeit within the overall performance management and inspection framework.

It should be noted, however, that in the area of priority setting and evidence, the precise degree of flexibility is largely untested at the present time, but it is in keeping with the wider changes that are being developed and promoted across local government performance management (see below).

3.2 Youth Matters

Youth Matters (YM) is the allied framework to ECM for young people that was first published as a Green Paper in 2005. Although YM is not yet a legislative duty (as it is a part of the current Education White Paper), it currently exists as a statutory duty of sorts and closely follows the architecture of ECM in terms of the principles that underpin the framework, the five outcomes, and the developing inspection regime. The government has now finished the consultation on the Youth Matters

Green Paper proposals (including a response from 19,000 young people) and published *Youth Matters: Next Steps* in March 2006.

The Youth Matters proposals differ significantly from ECM. ECM is in essence an outcome-based planning and evaluation framework for use by a range of partners to ensure co-ordination and integration of their own *existing* service planning processes. This means that ECM involves no 'new' policies or programmes of action, other than the proposals for new legislative duties, governance arrangements and performance management and inspection regimes (see section 3.4 below) to facilitate co-ordination and integration of partners' work.

Unlike ECM, *Youth Matters: Next Steps* does outline new, concrete national policy proposals for young people, the essence of which are captured by the document sub-heading: 'something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to'.

Places to go and things to do

The proposals focus on **statutorily requiring local authorities to provide a strong local offer of 'places to go and things to do'**. While the menu of positive activities for young people will be developed and delivered locally – and incorporated within Children and Young People's Plans – once again, local autonomy will be guided by national standards for what categories of activities can be included. The new statutory duty is expected to be issued in 'late 2006'. YM also states that the government will work with relevant national non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) – particularly those sponsored by DCMS – to 'ensure [that NDPB] programmes are aligned with Youth Matters aims and locally with Children and Young People's Plans' (DfES, 2006).

Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund

Youth Matters has committed £115m over the next two years to two new ring fenced funds (the **Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund**) that are designed to give young people purchasing power and a say in the design and delivery of services and activities for young people. There will be an average of £500,000 available for each local authority that young people will be able to bid for to use for a variety of purposes (e.g. a re-design of an underused community space, a youth café etc.). However, the government will once again issue national guidance on 'how we want the fund to be used ... [and] we expect a strong focus on disadvantage' (DfES, 2006).

Giving young people purchasing power is also reflected in the most media-worthy element of the new proposals, the **Youth Opportunity Card**. The Card will be piloted in 10 areas over the next two years (including Bolton and Liverpool), to test whether take-up of 'positive activities' by young people, especially from disadvantaged groups, increases if young people are given spending power. Two different amounts are currently being trialled – £25 per month and £12 per month – and ultimately the plans are for all 13-19 year olds to be eligible for the card if the trials prove successful.

Information, advice and guidance

Proposals for **reforming information, advice and guidance (IAG) for services for 11-19 year olds** are also included in *Next Steps*. The main changes are to devolve responsibility for commissioning IAG (and the funding that goes with it) from Connexions to local authorities, working through children's trusts, schools and colleges, and to develop quality standards for providers of IAG. The draft standards will be in place by November 2006 and they will be standards against which Ofsted could inspect. The key driver behind the changes in IAG for young people is the reform of 14-19 education, as set out in the 2005 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper, and particularly, the launch in 2008 of five of the fourteen new specialised Diplomas in vocational education.

Volunteering

Lastly, Youth Matters also includes proposals for **greater participation by young people through ensuring that volunteering opportunities are available locally**, by setting guidance for local authorities to work with the Russell Commission Implementation Body (which is the implementation body for a national programme of volunteering opportunities for young people, which was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 2005). The YM proposals also include a commitment to look at the ways in which young people's volunteering efforts might be formally recognised within the new 14-19 qualifications framework, and consultation is underway with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Russell Implementation Body to this end.

3.3 Relevant DfES policies

In addition to the cross governmental ECM/YM 'change for children and young people' agenda, there are a number of DfES-specific policies which have an immediate relevance for the activities that museums, libraries and archives engage in with children and young people.

3.3.1 Early years and family learning

Establishing policies for improving the support given to parents and young children, particularly in areas of social and economic disadvantage, has been a central plank of the New Labour government's drive to combat social exclusion specifically, and create 'equality of opportunity' more generally.

Sure Start and Bookstart

The major programme in this respect is Sure Start, which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by:

- increasing the availability of childcare for all children
- improving health and emotional development for young children

- supporting parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment.

Sure Start is itself an umbrella programme for a wide range of individual programmes, some of which are universal, some of which target particular local areas or disadvantaged groups within England. Sure Start is premised on the integrated delivery of services for early years, particularly by co-locating childcare, early education and other health and family services in Children's Centres. The government aims to have established 2,500 Children's Centres in England by 2008.

Public libraries are now firmly plugged into this integrated delivery of early years services via their early years education services, and specifically their delivery of the Book Trust's Bookstart programme, as well as other activities such as Rhyme Time and Storytime. As with Sure Start, Bookstart was first established in SureStart areas but has since been extended as a universal (or near) universal offer and similarly, the majority of public libraries now offer activities for early years children and their parents and carers.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Sure Start unit within DfES also published guidance in 2002 for those who work with, and care for, children aged 0-3 ('Birth to Three Matters'). However, Birth to Three Matters is in the process of being replaced by new guidance which will combine the focus on 0-3 year-olds with the existing DfES 'Foundation Stage' guidance for three to five-year-olds that was published in 2000 as the first stage of the national curriculum. It is intended that the new framework, The Early Years Foundation Stage, will be implemented by 2008 and, as well as harmonising the two separate frameworks, will also dovetail better with Key Stage 1 of the national curriculum.

Family Learning

Overlapping with early years programmes are a raft of 'family learning programmes' that have been setup across government. A key focus of these programmes is family literacy, language and numeracy. This is a strand of DfES' *Skills for Life: National Strategy for Improving Adult Literacy and Numeracy Skills* (2001). Family literacy, language and numeracy programmes are co-ordinated by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and delivered in partnership with Local Education Authorities (LEAs). They are designed to:

- improve parents' ability to help their children
- improve children's acquisition of literacy, language and numeracy.
- raise the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents

At present, most family literacy, language and numeracy programmes are delivered in schools, though LSC guidance does stress that LEAs are expected to work in partnership to deliver programmes and embed them in the community.

3.3.2 Extended schools

In 2005, the DfES published its prospectus for *Extended Schools: Access to Opportunities and Services for All*. Extended Schools will 'provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community' (DfES, 2005). The intention is for all children to be able to access these extended services and activities by 2010. The ambitious proposals will also mean all secondary schools opening from 8am to 6pm all year round, including through holiday periods.

The 'core' offer provided by extended schools will focus on providing:

1. **'wraparound' childcare** provided on the school site or through other local providers from 8am-6pm
2. **a varied menu of out-of-hours activities for children**, such as homework clubs and study support, sport, arts activities, volunteering and visits to external cultural facilities (e.g. museums and galleries)
3. **referral to a range of specialist support services**, such as speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services
4. **access to school-based facilities (e.g. ICTs, sports and arts) for local communities**, including family learning

As with Sure Start Children's Centres, the logic behind Extended Schools is to bring together more opportunities and services for children and young people into single settings, while also looking to open up schools' assets to the wider community. The policy imperatives behind the Extended Schools proposals therefore relate to improving educational standards for children (the extensive offer of beyond the classroom activities and support services), as well as removing barriers to participation in the labour market ('affordable' childcare) and supporting lifelong learning for parents and carers.

The DfES is keen to stress that the plans will not involve additional work for teachers. Rather, schools will work in partnership with other providers to offer new and extended services. Over £500m is being made available through local authorities between 2005-8 to fund the proposals, with an additional £250m being made available directly to all schools through the Schools Standards Grant between 2006-8. Between now and 2010, local authorities will be working with other children's service partners to allocate this funding to schools and draw up local plans for extended services. (See sections 4.5.2 and 7.4.2 for discussions on the implications of Extended Schools for museums, libraries and archives.)

3.3.3 Personalised learning

As the DfES itself points out, personalised learning is not a DfES initiative – it is a philosophy in education. It is of relevance to the present discussion as the concept is embedded within the current Schools White Paper, which seeks to 'create a step change in the personalised learning

support available to every child². However, as yet, it is still far from certain what this will actually mean beyond the improved vocational qualification offer contained within the 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper. Similarly the 2004 DfES briefing, *A National Conversation about Personalised Learning*, sketches out some abstract principles and components of what personalised learning might be, without ever committing to any concrete proposals:

- having pupils' individual needs addressed, both in school and extending beyond the classroom and into the family and community;
- providing coordinated support to enable them to succeed to the full
- ensuring a safe and secure environment in which to learn, with problems effectively dealt with
- have a real say about their learning

These rather generic principles have yet to be fleshed out, but it is perhaps worth noting that the emphasis given to addressing individual needs potentially covers two different though related elements. Firstly, it is embodied in ideas about 'pupil voice' within education; not just in the form of schools councils, but consulting children in much more pervasive ways on how schools are run. This would find a clear echo in the Youth Matters proposals regarding the involvement of children and young people in the design of services.

Secondly, and of more relevance to museums, libraries and archives, is the fact that addressing individual learning needs opens up debates about how children and young people learn. These debates cover a wide terrain of research and ideas, including different modes of learning (VAK – visual/audio/kinaesthetic), as well as notions of 'multiple intelligences' (Gardner, 1993), 'emotional intelligence' (Goleman, 1995) and the importance of 'learning to learn'³. While there is no consensus surrounding these debates – meaning that the terms tend to be competing/overlapping concepts – they all have in common a concern for a broader, more differentiated learning experience than that traditionally provided within the classroom environment. This has a clear resonance, then, with much of the education work undertaken within the sector, particularly museums' educational provision for children and young people.

3.4 ECM performance management framework

Local authorities are required to develop Children and Young People's Plans in conjunction with advisors based in the Government Offices. The plans are reviewed annually and look forward three years. A comprehensive framework for performance management and inspection

² DfES Schools White Paper: Summary of Main Policies (<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/hottopics/summary06.shtml>)

³ For instance, see the Sorrell Foundation research on how to learn; being mentored in learning progress; and having time to pursue one's own interests and having them exhibited (www.thesorrellfoundation.com)

has already been established for ECM. While YM will have different indicators, the type of indicators used and the process of assessment will be modelled closely on ECM.

The ECM outcomes framework builds on the five broad outcomes outlined above (Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution, Be Healthy, Achieve Economic Well Being, Stay Safe), with 25 more specific 'aims' that sit under these outcome areas. The outcomes and aims are measured via quantitative targets and indicators chosen by DfES, although how services are credited with having contributed to any change in the indicators is established through a range of 'legislative judgements'. In turn, these legislative judgements are made on the basis of 'illustrative evidence', which can be less prescriptive than the numerical indicators⁴.

Although the ECM framework is now well established across Government, it should be noted that there remains a live discussion within DfES and with key stakeholders (the 'Knowledge for Improvement' project), about how to best measure outcomes. But changes at this stage in the development of ECM are only likely to be minor refinements rather than wholesale changes. It is perhaps worth noting that at present, only two of the 46 indicators used within the framework directly assess children and young people's involvement with culture.

Assessment

Assessment of ECM will focus on two dedicated processes:

- Joint Area Reviews (once every 3 years) – a '360 degree' review of 'what it's like to be a child in your area', involving all inspectorates (Ofsted, social care, health, probation, etc.)
- Annual Performance Assessment (APA) – a self assessment process that currently only focuses on local authority provision.

The Joint Area Review and APA will also feed directly into the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process, by which local councils' services for people and communities are assessed. In addition, assessment of local action plans will also take in progress towards Children and Young People Local Area Agreement (LAA) priorities and targets, and standards-based assessment of health organisations.

Clearly, this means that ECM sits within a complicated set of inspection regimes and performance management processes. The government itself admits in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* that

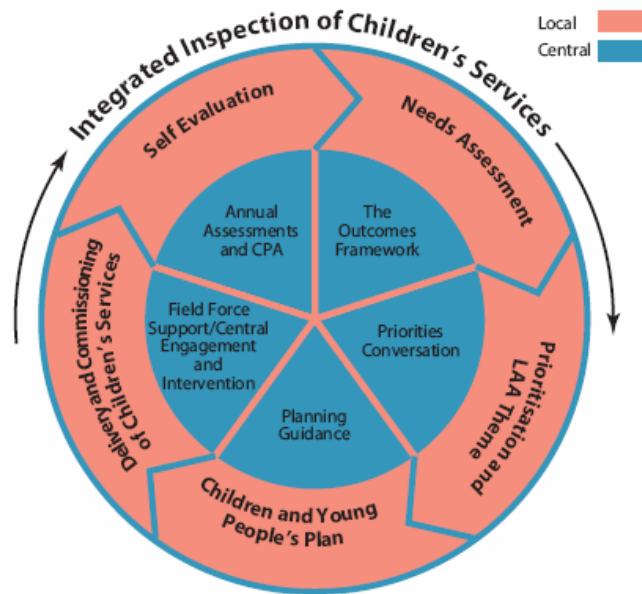
[t]he current arrangements have grown up in very different ways, and Government Offices, central government and Inspectorates have rather different roles. We are determined to bring together the national requirements, and those who work to support them, in

⁴ See <http://tinyurl.co.uk/yda7> for a diagram summarising the 5 ECM outcomes, 25 aims, plus associated targets, indicators and legislative judgements.

order to ensure that these processes are simplified to support and drive integration and act as a focus for local change.

That is, it is going to take time to achieve the transition from a plethora of different inspection regimes and reporting requirements to the harmonised ECM performance management framework. The same document also attempts to visually represent how the new ECM/Children’s Trust/Children and Young People Plans fit into the wider process of inspection and service improvement, in what is described as the ‘improvement cycle for children’s services’ (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: The improvement cycle for children’s services



Source: HM Government (2004)

The inspection model illustrated above will apply to the core partners in Children’s Trusts in each local authority as part of the Joint Area Review and APA. The systems and processes involved are still evolving, and are unlikely to directly affect the museums, libraries and archives sector in the short to medium term (see section 3.5.1 below). Should institutions in the sector seek to become more closely involved in delivering to ECM aims and objectives, they should be aware of how the performance and assessment of Children’s Trusts will be judged, as this will have a bearing on the services they will be expected to provide.

3.5 Children and young people's policy and local governance

The new agenda for children and young people's services shares many of the hallmarks of the overall approach that the New Labour administration has adopted to improving public services and tackling disadvantage. At the core of this approach – which has developed since the start of New Labour's second term in 2001 – is a belief that partnership working is the key to addressing complex, multi-dimensional problems such as social exclusion and area-based deprivation. This has resulted in central government placing an increasing responsibility on local authorities to lead in delivering a range of services through partnership working.

Thus, the emphasis on multi-agency working within ECM/YM/Children's Trusts is part of a wider re-organisation of local governance⁵ in which multi-agency partnerships of service providers are formed to deliver outcome-driven, identified local priorities. The Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are perhaps the most clear illustration of this approach, but the Local Area Agreement (LAA) process is also premised on the notion of partnership working.

In return for playing a leadership role in bringing together partners, local authorities benefit from:

- being given greater discretion in terms of what priorities can be set
- having flexibility in how priorities are achieved locally
- simplified funding streams to deliver against identified priorities

The LAA process is particularly important here as one of the four LAA 'blocks' is specifically focused on children and young people. In turn, the ECM outcome framework is now the accepted framework in which all individual local authorities develop and measure LAAs for children and young people. It is also hoped that, in the long term, Children's Trusts will be fully integrated into the wider mechanisms of local governance by 'meshing' with LSPs, and in part, this may come about through a closer alignment between LSPs and the LAA process (Schofield, 2005).

3.5.1 The museum, library and archive sector's engagement with local governance

As ECM is in its first year of full-scale implementation, it is not yet known as to how exactly the new legislative duties, governance arrangements and performance management framework will operate in practice; and in

⁵ 'Local governance' in this context refers to the set of institutions that are involved in determining and delivering policy at a local level. As described in the main body of this section, the direction of New Labour's policy in this respect is to engage a much wider range of interests in this process (the voluntary and private sectors, education institutions etc.). This bringing together of a wider array of interests, rather than placing responsibility solely within the hands of the local authority, is what distinguishes 'local governance' from 'local government'.

turn, how this will affect the museum, library and archive sector. But, as noted in the previous section, ECM/YM is indicative of a wider approach to the re-organisation of local governance in terms of multi-agency working and locally set priorities within an overall central government framework of standards, guidance and inspection. From the experience of this type of policymaking and delivery to date, we would argue that it is an approach which represents both an opportunity and a threat for the museum, library and archive sector (and indeed, for the rest of the cultural sector). The **opportunity** stems from:

- the recognition by government that tackling the complex social and economic roots of disadvantage and inequality requires a multi-dimensional approach
- the duty that is now placed on local authorities to carry this through by formally involving external partners in the process of local governance
- the degree of local flexibility and autonomy afforded to local authorities in choosing who to involve in the partnership process and how outcomes should be delivered.

The main **threat** is that across the museum, library and archive sector specifically, and across the cultural sector more broadly, there is actually relatively little engagement with the processes of local governance. So, despite the increasing emphasis on multi-agency working, cultural sector bodies sometimes do not even appear on the partnership 'radar' (as is the case in the 2005 National Youth Agency/LGA document quoted above in Section 3.1 regarding the wider group of partners to be involved in Children's Trusts).

This trend is also demonstrated in relation to LSPs. The recently published national evaluation of LSPs shows that across LSPs in England, only 19 per cent involve 'culture/sport/leisure agencies' in their 'core' membership, and only 58 per cent report cultural partners as part of their 'wider' membership. This compares with, for instance, the 53 per cent of LSPs that have 'HE/FE/colleges' as core members, and the 85 per cent of LSPs that involve them as wider partners (European Institute for Urban Affairs *et al*, 2006).

This lack of engagement in local decision-making processes and service delivery priorities has a correlate in the generally low profile that culture has within the overarching frameworks developed by central government, such as ECM. The importance here is that these frameworks establish both the parameters in which local action takes place, and the processes by which performance is measured and assessed. Put more bluntly, the outcomes and performance management processes are set by the partners that are around the table and this rarely seems to include culture.

This means that the cultural sector then has to expend time, energy and resources simply in order to achieve 'catch-up' and get culture, and indicators for measuring the contribution of culture, onto the agenda. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process is a case in point, as indicators for culture will only finally be incorporated within CPA in 2008 – the last year in which it will be run in its current form. Moreover,

these issues regarding culture's low profile in the development of national-local policy for outcome-focused service improvement are all present in relation to ECM/YM.

The good news is that there are local authorities that are potentially interested in involving the cultural sector in partnerships delivering services for children and young people. In the North West, for example, research carried out for this report indicated that Knowsley could consider developing libraries as centres for young people, and that Blackburn with Darwen perceives museums, libraries and archives as having an important contribution to make to ECM and YM outcomes. Throughout the country, however, the onus will be on the museum, library and archive (and wider cultural) sector to work towards ensuring that it is included in local Children's and Young People's Plans. (See section 8.3 for a more detailed discussion of how these issues are being addressed in the North West.)

4 National literature review of the evidence of impact of museum, library and archive activities on children and young people

4.1 Summary: headline findings

Since 1997, the Government has had very clear goals for museums, libraries and archives in terms of broader social impact. As Travers & Glaister (2004) make clear, while not unique to Britain, institutions in other countries are rarely expected to pursue such wide social and educational objectives in return for their government funding. Even in the US, where a good deal of the international research on museum learning, for example, has been done (Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri, 2000), the 'weight' of expectation is less, largely because arts and cultural interventions in education are often funded via philanthropic means, rather than as part of core government funding.

In the UK, there is an expectation that museums, libraries and archives can help to deliver on everything from urban regeneration to improved community relationships; but where children and young people are concerned; the strongest focus is on what might be called 'educational' outcomes. This is primarily because:

- much of the activity that takes place within the sector is concerned with the related but wider term 'learning'
- there is a general need to raise educational standards in a "knowledge economy"; and,
- education is seen as integral to combating social exclusion:

Learning can be a powerful agent in combating social exclusion by giving people the ability, skills and confidence to engage with society
(DCMS, 2000)

It is worth pointing out that this focus on social exclusion is not necessarily reflected in the international literature. In other words, international research on museums, libraries and archives tends to look at effects on the wider population, rather than groups deemed to be excluded or at risk of exclusion.

Education and learning in this context needs to be understood more widely and includes not only improved academic performance, but also what is sometimes called 'personal, social and emotional development.' A core part of the 'foundation stage' of education for 3-5 year olds, is based on the notion that 'emotional well-being, knowing who you are, where you fit in and feeling good about yourself'⁶, are all integral to the learning

⁶ Qualification and Curriculum Authority Guidance

process. These attitudes, sometimes referred to as 'non-cognitive skills', include things like persistence, dependability or adaptability, and some scholars argue (Heckman & Kreuger, 2003) that they are at least as, if not more, important than cognitive or academic skills in predicting success in the job market.

More recently these broad educational outcomes have been joined by a wave of policy concerns, which could be grouped colloquially under the heading of 'respect.' This includes issues such as citizenship, social cohesion and co-operation, which have risen up the political agenda with much of the focus being on children and young people. Given the role of cultural activity in the formation of identity and in developing relationships and attitudes to the wider society, policymakers are now increasingly looking to how cultural institutions can contribute towards outcomes in these broader social policy areas as well.

Headline findings:

- A growing literature attests to the effects of cultural activities on the development of 'non-cognitive' skills such as dependability or perseverance
- Some scholars argue that these attributes can be as important as academic qualifications in ensuring success in the job market
- It appears to be the case that the majority of these non-cognitive skills and other 'extrinsic' benefits result from prolonged or habitual interaction with organisations such as museums, libraries and archives
- Museums, libraries and archives are increasingly working in partnership with schools and other public agencies to promote learning opportunities
- Surveys attest to the fact that children and young people derive enjoyment from museum, library and archive-related activities, and some argue that this enjoyment is related to improved educational outcomes
- There is a need for increased research into why this enjoyment does not translate into more frequent attendance in some cases and what the barriers to this are
- There have been some longitudinal studies, particularly looking at early years, but the scale of these tends to be quite small. The major gap is around longer term work, with the focus of most research on short term outputs and impressions, rather than longer term outcomes.

4.2 Methodology for gathering and assessing literature

The aim of this section is to provide a narrative literature review, designed to inform policy, provide evidence where possible to support advocacy material, and identify major gaps in the existing literature. It is not a 'systematic review' of all the literature in the field of museums, libraries and archives and their interactions with children and young people. Thus, it is less about complete coverage (analysing as many documents as possible), and more about assessing and analysing the major findings of the literature and its relevance to the subject of the research. In addition, the type of literature consulted is wider in this type of review (and in this type of policy area), and includes consultancy reports, project evaluations and 'grey literature,' (an increasingly ill-defined term, which traditionally means literature without an ISBN number – so 'unpublished' – but is increasingly used to refer to literature not fully in the public domain).

The literature on economic, social and educational impacts of museums, libraries and archives is growing fast⁷. Beyond museums, libraries and archives-specific material, there is a huge literature on arts and education. In the UK, this includes recent initiatives such as Creative Partnerships and Extended Schools, which we consider briefly below. However, there are important differences between general 'arts in education' material and that pertaining to museums, libraries and archives. The former are largely concerned with the participative nature of the activity, with some studies (e.g. McCarthy *et al*, 2004) claiming that the strongest effects come from direct involvement, for example in the performing arts, rather than being a member of the audience or visitor. Thus we have referred to 'arts education' studies below, but in general, results cannot be read directly across without an understanding of the degree of participation involved.

In addition to our own knowledge of the literature, all interviewees were asked to provide references to key material. These were particularly helpful in tracking down international and regional studies, though as we have made clear above, there are important policy differences between the UK and other countries, which mean that we have concentrated on UK material in this section.

We have consulted academic literature, particularly the major reviews of museum learning by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at the University of Leicester. In particular, the large bibliographic review, *Researching Learning in Museums and Galleries 1990-1999* by Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri, provides a very useful overview of work on museum education. Academic journals such as: *Museum International*; *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *Curator*, *International Journal of Science Education*, *Journal of Librarianship* and *Information Science* as well as general purpose cultural policy journals such as the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* and *Media, Culture and Society* were also consulted.

⁷ See *New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (BOP, 2005) for a fuller discussion.

An initial scan of the literature was used to produce the ‘top level findings’ above. We used these findings as ‘a sanity check’ in later interviews, such as those with policymakers at DCMS. These interviews have confirmed our broad findings.

4.3 General issues in discussing the evidence against policy areas

Much of the impact of museums, libraries and archives has historically been to do with externalities, rather than the deliberate efforts of institutions themselves (Scott, 2004; Bryson, Usherwood and Streatfield, 2002). Thus while there may have been educational benefits associated with visiting museums, for example, these were almost incidental to the core purpose of the institutions, which was to preserve and display artefacts. This view of museums as ‘under-utilised resources for learning’ has been strongly challenged in recent years by large-scale programmes with an explicitly educational emphasis, such as Renaissance in the Regions or the Museums Education Partnership programme (Hayton Associates, 2006). Public libraries have a longer track record in this area, having always had a more clearly defined pedagogic and social purpose than museums and galleries. Libraries are now increasing the focus of active literacy work, from Bookstart for early years, to services for adults with poor literacy.

But despite increasing engagement in broadly defined education work, when it comes to ‘mapping’ outcomes against specific policy objectives, it needs to be borne in mind that very few of these programmes were developed with programme-specific policy outcomes in mind. Thus, while projects may have broad goals such as improved literacy or self-confidence, these do not always translate easily to the more detailed measurements required by policymakers.

In addition, museums, libraries and archives deliver their services within the context of a wide social and educational framework; it is thus rarely possible to isolate the impact of museum, library and archive interactions with children and young people from other interactions in their home life, schools or with peers. Fortunately, government-sponsored evidence gathering in this area is increasingly taking an holistic view of the role of cultural agencies within the wider public sector, viewing agencies as ‘having a bearing on’ changes in individuals and society – rather than trying to track specific changes to specific interactions.

Indeed, documents such as *Every Child Matters*, *Excellence and Enjoyment* and the 14-19 Green Paper all stress the importance of partnership between agencies in providing the sort of different learning opportunities that can engage children and young people. In this context, it is significant that recent research (Hayton Associates, 2006) shows an increase in the demand from schools for museum and gallery education, and an increase in the capacity of museums and galleries to deliver such educational opportunities. In other words, museums, libraries and archives are increasingly becoming recognised – and able to play a role – as valued partners in the delivery of learning for children and young people.

4.4 ECM Outcomes

As Section 3 describes, ECM is a broad re-structuring of services for children and young people, with intended outcomes in five areas:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well-Being

It could be argued that museums, libraries and archives can have an impact across all of these areas (Bookstart, 2006), and indeed recent work (Carneiro and Heckman, 2003), suggests that in helping to develop 'non cognitive skills' such as reliability, adaptability and self-confidence, museums, libraries and archives can be seen as contributing towards 'Staying Healthy' (personal, social and emotional development); 'Enjoyment and Achievement'; 'Making a Positive Contribution' and even 'Achieving Economic Well-Being' in later life.

Similarly, Bird and Ackerman (2004) have summarised the literature on the connections between poor levels of literacy and the processes of social exclusion. They conclude that there is evidence of a link between poor literacy and a range of other outcomes: from educational attainment to offending, mental health and poor quality of life (Sparkes and Glennister, 2002; Parsons 2002; Bynner and Parsons, 1997). The growth of literacy schemes, particularly in libraries, results in part from this increased understanding of the connections between poor levels of literacy and the process of social exclusion.

This means that demonstrating that interventions can have an effect on literacy also means that a case could be made for the same interventions to have a bearing on wider 'social goods', such as health and well-being.

However, what is usually measured in the evidence relating to museums, libraries and archives are solely the immediate effects of interaction – such as literacy or non-cognitive skills. This means that demonstrating the sector's role in bringing about wider social goods that relate to ECM is difficult. One has to argue that improved literacy or non-cognitive skills are 'intermediate' outcomes that then contribute to other outcomes, such as improved health or employment. It is then necessary to cite evidence from outside the sector (such as Bird and Ackerman, 2004, mentioned above) to make this case. Alternatively, a methodology for measuring the wider social benefits of literacy and non-cognitive skills would have to be included at the stage of research/evaluation design, but this rarely happens.

The result is that it is far easier to make a case for how the sector makes an *holistic* contribution to improving the life chances of children and young people, rather than against the five somewhat arbitrarily demarcated ECM outcomes. What we mean here is that the five ECM outcomes are arbitrarily demarcated as they are all inter-related, overlapping and mutually re-inforcing. That is, it has been well established that children and young people who are 'healthy' and 'safe' are more likely to 'make a

positive contribution' and 'achieve economic well being'. Similarly, those that 'enjoy and achieve' are also more likely to be 'healthy' and 'achieve economic well being', and so on. Significantly, this poses problems for empirical research as the variables are likely to exhibit a high degree of 'collinearity', making it hard to unpack and attribute the relative effects of each (Mohan *et al*, 2004) – e.g. does low educational attainment adversely affect mental health or does poor mental health adversely affect educational attainment?⁸.

There is no historical body of literature that assesses the social and educational impacts of museums, libraries and archives in terms of the categories and objectives of ECM, as it is both a new and a relatively narrowly defined government policy. For this and the reasons outlined above, it has been more constructive to focus on the literature in relation to the broad outcomes and aims of the ECM framework, rather than in relation to specific targets, indicators and evidential requirements⁹.

We have also placed more emphasis on the areas in which the evidence base is strongest in relation to ECM. At present, this concerns the immediate effects of children and young people's interaction with the sector, principally in terms of enjoyment and learning outcomes – particularly of life skills/non-cognitive skills, but also related specifically to literacy.

4.4.1 Enjoy and Achieve

It might be thought that a policy framework that uses the term 'enjoy' would be particularly well-suited to cultural interactions, and indeed enjoying recreation is an aim of ECM – even if the weight of measurement within the ECM leans very much towards the 'achievement' side of 'enjoy and achieve'.

Interaction with museums, libraries and archives is generally viewed as enjoyable by both young people and intermediaries such as teachers or parents. This is important in light of the findings from the OECD Reading for Change Research (Twist *et al*, 2003), that reading for pleasure is a strong indicator of academic success. Similarly, research undertaken by the Centre for Education and Industry at Warwick University (2004) found a correlation between enjoyment and subject learning in museums, and Bryson *et al* (2002) argue that enjoyment is seen as a primary reason for visiting museums or libraries.

⁸ More prosaically, the connection between each of the five outcomes and the 25 corresponding 'sub-outcomes' or 'aims' (as they are labelled within ECM) is also somewhat arbitrary. For instance, it is hard to see how the aim of 'develop enterprising behaviour', which has indicators related to employment and business start-ups and currently sits within 'Make a positive contribution', could not equally be defined as part of 'Achieve economic well-being'. Equally, what is broadly the area of 'life skills'/non-cognitive skills (self confidence; personal, mental and emotional development) occurs in three of the 25 aims, each time in a slightly different guise. But the degree to which these three different versions (specifically: 'mentally and emotionally healthy', 'achieve personal and social development' and 'develop self confidence') actually represent real and important distinctions, is questionable.

⁹ The difficulty of assessing research evidence against more narrowly defined government policies is, of course, not an issue that is specific to children and young people. This was also highlighted in the MLA-commissioned review of broader social policy areas, *New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (BOP, 2005), for example.

As the CILIP (2002) report argues, there is a danger that if we focus on the links between learning in cultural institutions and school work, much of the joy of learning for pleasure is lost. This loss would be unfortunate, not least because the PIRLS project (Twist *et al*, 2003) suggests that whereas reading skills have improved in the UK since 1998, children's enjoyment of reading has declined. Despite the success of the government's Literacy Hour in raising standards, British children seem to enjoy reading less and be less confident readers than their international peers.

In 'What did you learn at the museum today?' a study of the museum education programme delivered via Renaissance in the Regions (Hooper-Greenhill *et al*, 2004), both primary and secondary school children reported high levels of enjoyment, and a sense of utility from the visits. However, despite 87 per cent of children reporting that they felt they had learned something interesting, only 55 per cent of secondary school children said they might visit again. A similar finding was reported by Hooper-Greenhill *et al* (2004) in their evaluation of the National/Regional Museums Education Partnerships, where 73 per cent of Key Stage 2 (KS2) pupils said that their visits had made them want to find out more, but by Key Stage 3 only 55 per cent said they would come again. The reasons for this seeming discrepancy would be a useful focus of further research.

In addition to enjoyment, the vast majority of teachers (Hooper-Greenhill *et al*, 2004, 2005) feel that interaction with museums, libraries and archives can help deliver curriculum-based outcomes (which form many of the 'Enjoy and Achieve' outcome indicators). Similarly, pupils in the same study believed that they may get improved marks, at least for related project work. The review of the Museums and Galleries Education Programme (CEI, 2004) found some teachers reporting 'improved quality of discussion', or improved question and answer sessions in curriculum work related to museum learning, but this was not formally assessed. As the report comments, "the use of assessment in relation to museum and gallery learning is at an early stage and will require close co-operation between schools and museums if it is to advance."

The difficulty and size of the task that is required to move beyond being able to evidence short term learning outcomes via the self reporting of pupil and teacher perceptions (e.g. "I learnt something interesting"), to looking at how cultural activities have a bearing on longer term educational achievement, is demonstrated by the forthcoming National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) study on the impact of Creative Partnerships on pupil attainment (Eames *et al*, forthcoming 2006).

The NFER work is a large scale study that looked at all 398 core schools selected by the first 16 Creative Partnerships (CP) offices in 2002. The work uses a statistical technique known as 'multilevel modelling' to examine whether there was a difference between those young people involved in CP and those that were not, when all relevant background factors are taken into account. It is based on analysis of a variety of pupil attainment records sourced from the National Pupil Database (NPD). The

number of records that were analysed for the students that were actively involved with CP indicates the size of the sample: 7,428 KS2 pupils, 4,165 KS3 pupils and a smaller number for KS4 (1,587).

The research shows that, 'when compared with national data, the analysis of young people's progress showed no evidence of an impact of attending Creative Partnerships activities at key stage 2 or key stage 4 and a very small positive impact at key stage 3.' However, the study was able to show that those that were involved with CP outperformed their peers in the same schools 'to a statistically significant extent at all three key stages', but even here:

given the fact that the differences in progress are small, and that other factors which were not included in the analysis could have influenced performance, it cannot be concluded with any certainty that Creative Partnerships has caused the observed differences. (Eames *et al*, forthcoming 2006)

The NFER study also illustrates the difficulty of engaging the most disadvantaged children and young people in (mainly) voluntary cultural/creative activities. So, while the research shows that CP was successful in targeting schools that are more disadvantaged than all schools nationally, those that actually took part in CP activities 'are less likely to be disadvantaged than pupils within these schools generally.'

However, there is evidence from the recent Bookstart evaluation that does suggest evidence for a link between some library activities and improvements in educational indicators within early years children. This is covered in the section on DfES early years policies below (4.5.1).

4.4.2 Make a Positive Contribution

Although from its title one might imagine a very wide range of activities that could be encompassed by the phrase 'Make a Positive Contribution', the five aims that the outcome is broken down into are actually quite directed. Specifically, the focus is on encouraging children and young people to get involved in activities with 'positive' social and economic externalities (volunteering, becoming an entrepreneur), while avoiding those with negative social and economic externalities (crime). This means that literature and evidence related to the importance of taking part in more general cultural/social activities – that are less 'directed' than these quite specific activities and behaviours – would more properly fall under the 'enjoy and achieve' outcome.

There appears to be little national research that looks at the impact of a range of activities that museums, libraries and archives provide that could be considered under this category of 'positive activities' (e.g. volunteering, crime reduction etc). There is, however, a much broader national initiative that is relevant in this context. Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) is a cross-departmental programme run by the DfES.

Building on the success of initiatives such as Splash and Splash Extra, PAYP differs from previous schemes in that it is a national year-round

programme. The programme is aimed at those young people (between the ages of 8 and 19) who are most at risk of committing a crime or becoming socially excluded. The programme provides sports, arts and cultural activities that are designed to be both diversionary and developmental in helping participants to avoid offending and steer them into education and training opportunities.

In 2005, CRG Research Ltd undertook the evaluation of the second year of PAYP activities. 22 areas were chosen for in-depth evaluation, including Manchester, Liverpool and Cumbria, that included a sample questionnaire of participants in the programme. 141,000 young people participated in the year 2 programme with 134,000 being classed as at risk. While libraries are eligible to bid for PAYP money, the types of activities that are actually provided and taken up by young people participating in the programme are categorised as Arts, Education, Health, Multimedia, Recreation and Sport, with Sports (456,000 participants), Education (227,000) and Recreation (201,000) having the highest participant numbers.

The evaluation reports that observational and anecdotal data supports the idea that PAYP 'is making a valuable contribution to steering young people away from crime and into worthwhile activities.' However, the report also notes that the lack of a suitable control group means that it is not possible to isolate the effects of PAYP from any other interventions that the young people may be receiving. Further, of one of the key aims of the programme, the report states that:

it is not possible at present to draw any firm conclusion as to the impact that PAYP has on local youth crime. The implementation of PAYP is across the board and hence there is no control group; also crime in general is falling.
(CRG Research, 2005)

Where impacts could be identified related to participants' self assessment of general learning outcomes (over 75% reported that they had learnt new things) and some effects on social capital formation (71% reported they had made new friends and similar numbers reported that they now got on better with adults). However, the authors offer caution that BME participants were disproportionate in the non-responses to the questionnaire, so the degree of representativeness of the sample is contestable. Later studies will attempt to tackle these failings and further investigate the links between the programme and crime.

It would be interesting to know more about why museums, libraries and archives are not involved in the PAYP programme to a greater extent, as this may shed more light on where the sector can best make a contribution in the area of helping children and young people to 'make a positive contribution'. It may well be that this also lies in the area of social capital formation associated with volunteering, and the encouragement of further involvement and decision-making by children and young people in the design of museum, library and archive services, activities and spaces.

4.4.3 Be Healthy

There is the beginnings of an evidence base relating to the contribution that museums, libraries and archives make to health and well-being. However, this is still very under-developed in relation to, for example, the impact of the arts on health, and at present, children and young people are not a particular focus of such activities in museums, libraries and archives – as compared with, for example, adult mental health (BOP, 2005).

The area where the contribution of museums, libraries and archives to 'being healthy' is strongest is through public libraries' early years work. However, the most detailed research and evaluation of these activities to-date (e.g. the Bookstart evaluation, section 4.5.1 below) has chosen instead to focus on cognitive and non-cognitive skill formation. This means that at present it is only really possible to infer health outcomes (e.g. that improved cognitive skills are key to mental and emotional health) on this evidence. However, the drive within early years settings to work jointly with health services would seem to provide the opportunity to pursue joint evaluation and research with partners in healthcare that focuses more on the medical and well-being impacts of public libraries' early years work. Public libraries also play a role in terms of health education and information, though this is a little researched area in terms of its impact on users.

4.4.4 Achieve Economic Well Being

Evidence that relates to museums, libraries and archives contribution to learning and skills development is relevant to this ECM outcome, given its strong focus on educational progression and employability.

Much of the recent research in the museum, library and archive sector in the UK presents skills outcomes in the context of the Inspiring Learning for All (ILFA) Framework (Resource, 2003), developed as a result of the Learning Impact Research Project (LIRP) at the University of Leicester. The LIRP resulted in a set of Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) that were specifically designed to evidence the impact of cultural organisations such as museums, archives and libraries. GLOs seek to capture both the development of cognitive ('Knowing and understanding') and non-cognitive skills ('Attitudes and values') that can take place through activities with museums, libraries and archives.

It is worth considering how non-cognitive skills can contribute to 'economic well being'. Carneiro and Heckman's research (2003) argues that employers value attitudinal traits such as dependability and stability, as much as or more than cognitive skills, and that these traits may be more important in determining personal success in the long term. In addition, the rising demand for what is sometimes called, 'emotional work' (Urry, 1990), that is, the ability to interact with people and to make them 'feel good', in an economy where services make up the vast bulk of employment and human services a growing percentage, suggests that such skills will be in increasing demand.

Carneiro and Heckman (2003) argue that the discussion of skills and skill formation in the policy literature has focussed too much on academic or cognitive skills, and has underestimated the importance of non cognitive or attitudinal ones. Moreover, they argue that because non-cognitive skills are more easily improved during adolescence, public policy can help stimulate their development over longer periods. This is important for the debate about combating social exclusion, as it suggests that public policy may have some role to play in helping to combat pre-existing inequalities. However, the corollary is that those most in need are less likely to voluntarily take up education and learning opportunities (Bennett, 1995; PISA, 2000), thus limiting the effectiveness of public intervention.

The importance of sustained interaction and prior knowledge

While public policy interventions may help develop positive learning habits, most research suggests that this is unlikely to be affected by only occasional interaction with cultural institutions. In their large scale study of the claims for social and economic impacts of the arts, McCarthy *et al* (2004) suggest that any process of change in individuals is cumulative, and typically takes time and sustained involvement. The importance of habit is also suggested by the final report on the Impact of Phase 2 of the Museums and Galleries Education Programme, (CEI, 2004) which suggests that prior knowledge or actual experience of museum visiting seems to have a favourable impact on learning outcomes. In particular, longer lasting benefits, such as developing the personal skills needed for behavioural change, seem to require some level of sustained involvement. The same report does, however, also point out that there can be significant gains in learning for those with lower baseline knowledge.

Sharon MacDonald's ethnographic studies of visitors to museums (1992, 1995), also suggest that visitors' prior knowledge and attitudes strongly influences what they take away from museum visits. Moreover, although these readings were not necessarily at odds with the 'official' readings of the exhibition (i.e. the meanings that the museum intended), "explicit or intended messages may be ignored or not seen by visitors, where they are at odds with visitors' cultural preconceptions." Although MacDonald's work was done largely with adults – who may be assumed to bring a stronger set of cultural preconceptions to museums – similar effects have been shown even with quite young children (Feher, 1990). For instance, Anderson *et al* (2001) found that children's recall of, and response to, museum experiences were "diverse, highly individualistic, and idiosyncratic", which is broadly in line with contemporary 'constructivist' notions of how people learn.

4.4.5 Stay Safe

Of all the ECM outcomes, 'Stay Safe' is the outcome that most reflects the roots of ECM in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry. That is, it is concerned with ensuring that services for children and young people (principally care services and schools) – together with the design and regulation of the external environment – prevent harm to children and young people.

Fundamentally, then, it is not about influencing the attitudes and behaviour of children and young people (these fall under 'Make a Positive Contribution'), but about service improvement for those charged with the care of (vulnerable) children and young people.

As such, there is very little that the museums, libraries and archives sector can contribute to this ECM outcome. The one area in which museums, libraries and archives may have a role to play is in helping to tackle children and young people's fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour. However, despite the existence of a number of individual projects and institutions that explicitly address these issues in the museum, library and archive sector (e.g. some of the work of Nottingham's Galleries of Justice), there is as yet no significant evidence in this area.

4.4.6 Youth Matters

The evidence base for the effects of interaction between young people and museums, libraries and archives is much less well developed when compared to that for children. Clearly this is an issue for the sector in England in looking at how to respond to the ECM framework for young people, Youth Matters (YM).

Museums, libraries and archives often find it challenging to attract and engage with young people, and the literature reflects this in terms of a lack of real evidence of impact with this age group. However, while early interventions are seen as optimal (as discussed above), engaging young people in cultural activities remains a necessary response to social exclusion. For instance, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2000) found that 15-year-olds whose parents have low occupational status, but who are highly engaged in reading, obtain higher average reading scores in PISA than students whose parents have high or medium occupational status, but who report to be poorly engaged in reading (Kirsch *et al*, 2002).

A range of recent initiatives have been established to try and improve museum, library and archive engagement with, and services for, young people. These include: Fulfilling their Potential, YouthBOOX, the Quality Leaders Project – Youth, and 'Opening the Doors' (Ryder and Bates, 2004). While the importance of early years education is rarely questioned, young people are sometimes what Griffin (2001) calls 'forgotten voices' – despite the need for specific interventions to help improve educational standards, particularly for those not in full time education (Reading Agency, 2004).

At the same time, the think tank IPPR (Edwards & Hatch, 2003) and others have criticised agencies such as Connexions for being too focussed on educational opportunities at the expense of social and emotional development, despite the significance of the latter in employability.

The models of working with young people that are emerging differ significantly from those for younger children, particularly in the importance they give to family interactions. Not surprisingly, the effect of parental involvement in learning lessens as children grow older (Bird, 2004; CILIP, 2002). Projects to improve literacy for young people with poor literacy skills that have already experienced failure in the formal education system often address this by building literacy into other activities that interest young people, such as sport, arts or technology.

Outreach work and partnership with other agencies are thus seen by many as the key to working with this group, and projects such as the YouthBOOX programme, which works with the youth service to attract young people into libraries using books that specifically interest their age group, aims to build on this understanding. YouthBOOX is aimed, in particular, at socially excluded 12–16 year olds and programmes have included video making, creating a magazine, cartoon workshops, photo-stories using a digital camera, lyric and rap writing, quizzes, theatre trips, cookery, visits to see authors/poets, picture book sessions, book buying and library makeovers.

Research into young adults and informal learning (NRDC, 2004) suggests that these ‘hooks’ – in other words starting with what interests young adults and moving on from there – are an important component of a successful strategy, as are educators ‘not being like teachers’, and provision that is tailored to the individual.

There is a strong overlap between YM and the ‘Make a Positive Contribution’ outcome of ECM, as YM is principally concerned with providing ‘developmental and diversionary activities’ for young people (as well as giving them greater voice and influence in the design of services for young people, and improving information, advice and guidance services).

4.5 DfES policies

4.5.1 Early years and family learning

Across the mass of research on the importance of education in combating social exclusion, almost all researchers concur on one thing – the importance of early intervention (Evangelou and Sylva, 2003, Melhuish, 2004). Strong research evidence shows that pre-school language and literacy experiences are accurate predictors of later educational attainment. For instance, in the UK, the ongoing ‘Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project’, funded by DfES and undertaken by the Institute for Education, is already demonstrating the importance of early years nursery education. The project is a longitudinal study of the effects of pre-school education on 3,000 children between the ages of 3 and 7 years. Pre-school nursery activities have an effect on all-round development and carry through into Key Stage 1, including

'disadvantaged children [that] benefit significantly from good quality pre-school experiences' (Sylva *et al*, 2004).

In addition to looking at the experience of school age children, it is clear that museums, libraries and archives make a contribution to the enjoyment and achievement of pre-school children, through the now extensive early years programmes run by public libraries. In particular, after starting out in priority SureStart areas, Bookstart has since been rolled out as a national book-giving programme for babies and toddlers. Book packs are given to parents by the health visitor at the nine-month health check; the pack consists of a free board book for the baby, and reading advice and information on how to join the library or take part in dedicated library-based activities, such as singing nursery rhymes (Rhyme Time) and reading stories (Storytime) with the toddlers in their care. In 2005, the scheme was extended to include additional packs at 9-24 months and again for three to four year-olds.

Bookstart has been the subject of longitudinal (though small scale) evaluation. The study (Wade and Moore, 2000) took a random sample of 43 pupils who had been given Bookstart packs at the age of nine months. This was matched with a control group who were not part of the scheme but who were in other respects similar according to a variety of socio-economic indicators. The performance of both groups in Key Stage 1 was compared, and on both teacher assessment measures and pupil test results, the Bookstart groups did better than the control group. The distinction was found in English skills, but also in maths and to a lesser extent science, leading the researchers to hypothesise that it is the attention and concentration that the child learns through reading at home that is the key learning skill – and that this can be transferred from reading to other subject areas.

Further evidence of the contribution that museums, libraries and archives make to the achievement of pre-school children is provided by evaluations of programmes similar to the Bookstart 'family', such as the Peers Early Education Partnerships (PEEPs), which supports parents in their children's early development and is delivered through group sessions that are based on books, singing, stories and play. Evangelou *et al* (2005), found that programmes like PEEPs were shown to make improvements in vocabulary, language comprehension, understanding about books and about numbers. The study took place over two years and consisted of 156 children and their families, with a comparison group of 86 children and families matched for age and socio-economic characteristics. It also found that the PEEPs children had higher self-esteem in their feelings about their cognitive and physical competence.

The identification of the importance of early intervention in literacy and language development has been accompanied by the knowledge that the strongest predictor of this early development is support in the home (Bird and Ackerman, 2004; Wade and Moore, 2000, Sylva *et al*, 2004). Indeed, Desforges and Abouchar (2003) argue that parental interest in, and commitment to, children's learning is a stronger predictor of pupil achievement even than social class, or the parents' own level of education (see also, CILIP, 2002, Sylva *et al*, 2004).

This concern with the effects that the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents have on children – particular in early years – has led to a raft of government and government-backed policies on ‘family learning’ (see section 3 above). Similarly, work on early learning and the importance of the home learning environment (Ackerman, 2005) has convinced practitioners of the need for cultural services that go beyond institutional walls and reach into the community, and often into people’s homes.

Thus projects such as Sure Start, or the family learning strand within the Skills for Life strategy, stress the importance of home and community-based learning schemes, both for children and for their effects on parenting skills. However, while Evangelou *et al*’s 2005 research on programmes such as PEEPs does show the effects of the programmes on parents, (who were more likely to take basic skills courses than those in the control group), there is less evidence of the effect of Bookstart on parents than there is for pupil attainment. However, the present phase of the Bookstart and Bookstart+ evaluation does focus more on what parents and carers gain through the programme, and how it influences interaction with their children; but the results are however not yet available.

As Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri report (2000), there is relatively little literature on family visits to museums. The primary interest of this work is the evidence that it provides for the importance of social interaction in learning. Various studies (Blud, 1990; Diamond 1986, McManus 1987) argue that social interaction is important as a factor that enhances learning behaviours.

In her study of families in the Science Museum in London, Blud (1990) suggests that interactive exhibitions are more successful than static ones in stimulating exchange between parents and children, though this finding may be related to the fact that science museums tend to have more interactive displays than other types of museums. Other factors which influenced the experience of the participants – and hence the capacity for learning – included the size of the group (small being better), spending enough time at the museum or gallery and, in particular, children and young people having some choice or control about what they learn and how (CEI, 2004; Griffin 2001).

Research in the US on children’s learning in children’s museums, (Hass, 1996; Crowley and Callanan, 1997) suggests that the importance of interaction with adults is not confined to family members, but that children were more likely to learn when any adults were involved in the interaction than otherwise. Similarly, Bird and Ackerman (2004) stress the importance of social networks to motivate and maintain interest in learning.

4.5.2 Extended Schools and study support

The government is currently promoting the concept of ‘extended schools’ which act as a focal point for a range of family and community services, including adults and family learning and arts activities, but also health and

social care. Extended Schools are thus one of the more likely local bases for the delivery of local ECM 'Change for Children Programmes', and it is vital that museums, libraries and archives are seen as active partners in this initiative.

Although there have been evaluations of the piloting of extended schools, we are still in the early days of their development. However, study support – a potentially confusing term that covers a wide range of out-of-hours informal learning activity (not just that which is curriculum-focused) – which is at the heart of the current Extended Schools agenda, has been more thoroughly researched in the UK.

In particular, between 1997 and 2000, the Quality in Education Centre at the University of Strathclyde undertook a large-scale longitudinal study of the impact of study support on academic attainment (Macbeath *et al*, 2001). The study tracked over 8,000 pupils and concluded that out of hours school learning, including cultural activities, could have significant and substantial effects on academic achievements, including GCSE passes. This was the case even where the activities (such as sport or arts) were not directly curriculum-related. The report does however admit that the 'ethos' of study support – i.e. its voluntary nature – may contribute to its effectiveness. This raises the question of whether children who are likely to volunteer for study support are also likely to do relatively well anyway in terms of academic attainment. In other words, the study does not provide evidence that relates to the hardest to reach learners.

The Strathclyde research, while encompassing some cultural activities as part of study support programmes, does not have a specific focus on these out-of-school hours cultural activities. However, more research has been conducted internationally on what might be called extra-curricular activities in museums, libraries and archives, much of which is relevant to the concept of Extended Schools.

An international study of arts, creativity and cultural education (Sharp and Le Metais, 2000) found that in most countries, schools are encouraged to provide children with access to external cultural resources – such as museums and galleries – but only some countries, such as Korea, specify an entitlement for pupils to undertake such visits. One of the longest studies of arts-based education outside of schools, including work with museums and libraries, was Shirley Bruce Heath's *Coming Up Taller* (1996). This research, carried out in the U.S., looked at a variety of out of school programmes, and found that those involved in arts-based themes (as opposed to community service or sport) had the most positive outcome, particularly for young people traditionally considered to be at risk. A similar argument was put forward by Catterall (1999) who, based on a sample of 25,000 children, claimed that learners could attain higher levels of achievement through their engagement with the arts. Although socio-economic status was still the most important factor influencing learning, he argued that the effect of the arts was most marked among children from low-income families.

But these claims have been disputed by others (see McCarthy *et al*, 2004, for a discussion), with most commentators stressing the primary importance of the home environment. Given this, however, Ruth Lupton (2004) of the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the LSE has concluded that schools in disadvantaged areas need to make more use of external resources (such as museums, libraries and archives) to attempt to bridge the gap in achievement related to the home environment. Where there are few or no books in the house, commentators argue that it is important to develop opportunities for children to choose, borrow and own them (e.g. Bird and Ackerman, 2004). The same study also notes that library staff often have particular skills in this field – in addition to being adults (but not teachers) with whom children may relate (see also the findings above related to the positive effect on learning behaviours of children interacting with adults).

The Summer Reading Challenge, now six years old, is the UK's biggest annual promotion of children's reading. The vast majority of UK library authorities participate, providing a large sample of readers. Research carried out for the 2004 Challenge (Reading Challenge, 2004) showed that 600,000 children took part in the challenge, of whom about half completed it. In the previous challenge, 96 per cent of participants enjoyed reading the books, 98 per cent of parents liked choosing books for themselves, 95 per cent of children, 'want to read lots more books,' and 96 per cent of them wanted to do the Challenge again next year. Importantly, the Challenge appears to improve reading enjoyment as well as attainment, which is a useful counterpoint to some school-based projects.

The Summer Reading Challenge offers a good opportunity to assess broad trends in reading and to understand what works in the promotion of reading. But as the most recent report itself comments (Reading Challenge, 2004), a year-on-year comparison of findings is difficult as the number and types of authorities who participate – and thus feed back results – changes each year. This lack of follow-up work means that it is difficult to determine how well the 'good intentions' of children translate into practice.

4.6 Limitations and gaps in the evidence base

Despite the growing volume of literature on the social and educational impacts of museums, libraries and archives, serious weaknesses and gaps in the evidence base remain.

- In particular, and disappointingly given the potential for such work with cohorts of children, there is **very little longitudinal work** that captures impacts or outcomes over time. Bookstart and other recent initiatives have been subject to some longitudinal research, but the scale of the samples in these cases is rather small.
- Most research is short term ("What did you learn today?") and there is very little (if any) work that looks at longer term impacts. Hooper-Greenhill and Moussouri (2000) claim that few studies

“have viewed learning as a continuous process and tried to explore visitor learning, before, during and after the visits, as different stages of a single learning process.”

- Very **few studies have any baseline against which to measure change**. This is understandable in the case of casual visitors to museums, libraries and archives, but less so in the case of say, school visits, where researchers should be able to ascertain some sort of baseline level of learning against which to measure change.
- Although the Bookstart study is again a useful counter example, **very few studies make use of control groups** who have not been subject to the same intervention, against which to compare results. This is consistent with the difficulties that the museum, library and archive sector has in researching ‘non users’, but means that for policymakers grappling with a variety of possible ways to intervene to, for example, involve reluctant learners, the findings are often less useful than they might be.
- Most evaluations are of specific programmes or projects and provide only a broad statistical picture, or questionnaire-type qualitative findings, but **little research exists that analyses the nature of the learning that takes place in such contexts**, through more in-depth ethnographic studies (for instance).
- The majority of the national literature on learning in museums looks at museum visits. **There is less material on learning through participation in programmes or workshops**, and even less on learning through the use of educational material from museums, or via websites.

In addition to these weaknesses, there are gaps in the literature, where very little research has been carried out and where it would be useful to know more:

- Not enough is known about the different kinds of effect that different kinds of interaction can have. In particular, we need to unpick the apparent differences between participation and attendance, and **understand the degree of participation that is required to produce demonstrable effects**.
- There appears to be a **discrepancy between stated intentions or impressions and behaviours**. As CILIP (2002) points out, when parents were asked what community resources supported their children’s learning, the public library was the most common response, though in practice they are not always the first choice of parents or children for homework support. Why is this the case?
- If, as some research indicates, museums, libraries and archives have a positive story to tell about impacts on ‘non-cognitive skills’, **how can the acquisition and development of such skills be measured in a more standardised and comparable manner?**

These gaps and limitations apply to the literature about museum, library and archive work in education and with children and young people in general, rather than specifically in relation to ECM and other government policies. The literature and research reviewed here does not set out to address these policies, and it would be inappropriate to find fault with it for failing to do so. Rather than to produce evidence relating specifically to individual policy areas that may change and evolve over time, the objective for the sector should be to enlarge and improve the quality of the evidence of its impact on children and young people in a way that is appropriate to the activities of the sector, and which can be applied in a range of contexts.

The next section indicates how the sector can present an 'offer' for children and young people in a way that relates to the context of ECM and other current policy areas.

5 Museum, library and archive ‘offer’ for children and young people

5.1 Components of the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people

This section outlines the museum, library and archive ‘offer’ for children and young people’s policy. It has been developed through a synthesis of the findings from the national literature review and the analysis of relevant children and young people’s policy. As such, it does not simply reflect where the weight of existing evidence falls, but also encompasses where the sector is best placed to make a contribution within the current policy context, even where the evidence base may at present be under-developed in some important respects.

The offer is designed to help the MLA partnership, other sector bodies, and institutions themselves to articulate and distil the impact of museum, library and archive activity with children and young people. It is therefore a tool to help advocate on behalf of the sector and, more importantly, to help museums, libraries and archives engage with other service providers by demonstrating how they are contributing to the wider objectives of stakeholders at local, regional and national level.

Proactive engagement will be crucial if the sector wants to be a part of the developing picture of integrated service provision for children and young people, as it will not happen as a matter of due course. Museums, libraries and archives are not core partners within Children’s Trusts, have no legislative duties with regard to children and young people, and are therefore not automatically present within the regime of inspection and performance management developed for ECM. But, as described above in section 3, the degree of autonomy within the new ECM governance arrangements, and the more general thrust towards multi-agency working in social policy areas, mean that service providers are open to working with a wide range of other partners to achieve common goals. The offer outlined below attempts to show what museums, libraries and archives can bring in working towards some of the most commonly defined goals for children and young people.

So, from the national review of evidence and children and young people policies, five distinct components of the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people can be identified:

1. **Language acquisition and the ability to learn:** this refers to the evidence from early years work within public library settings that demonstrates the impact on not simply language acquisition and development, but also the wider capacity to learn through helping toddlers to develop the attributes that this requires (attention, concentration, social interaction in groups etc.).

2. **Literacy development:** public libraries have both a general role in relation to literacy *per se* (across most of their activities), as well as a distinct and defined role through their involvement in (family) literacy campaigns and programmes. But the evidence base documenting the *specific* contribution of public libraries to literacy development in children and young people is under-developed at present.
3. **Curriculum support:** the museum, library and archive sector, particularly through museum education work, is now closely involved with work in schools to support and broaden the national curriculum. However, the long term impact of children and young people's interaction with museums, libraries and archives on formal educational attainment has yet to be demonstrated beyond early years.
4. **Recreation:** there is credible evidence to show that children and young people enjoy attending and participating in museum, library and archive activities. Further, there is an established positive connection between how enjoyable activities are and the learning that is associated with the activities. This is key in demonstrating how museums, libraries and archives can provide 'positive' activities for young people.
5. **Participation:** museums, libraries and archives provide safe and trusted settings for volunteering opportunities for young people. Institutions should also be alive to the opportunities for involving children and young people in the design of museum, library and archive services, activities and spaces. However, as yet, the national evidence base regarding museums, libraries and archives involvement in supporting young people's volunteering, and how children and young people are engaged in decision-making for the design and delivery of services (and the outcomes of these activities), does not exist (although there is some evidence relating to specific institutions).

In addition, there are two further components of a museum, library and archive offer for children and young people that are present as 'meta attributes' of the first five components:

6. **Non-cognitive skills:** there is some evidence that demonstrates that museums, libraries and archives contribute to a range of what can be described as 'non-cognitive' or 'life skills' for children and young people (e.g. self confidence, self awareness and decision-making capabilities, other aspects of personal development). Further, research suggests that these skills are manifest in behaviours such as stability, dependability and self management, which are highly valued in the labour market. However, more research is required to fully establish the kinds of non-cognitive or life skills that museums, libraries and archives help to develop in children and young people, and how these specific attributes can contribute to economic or health outcomes.

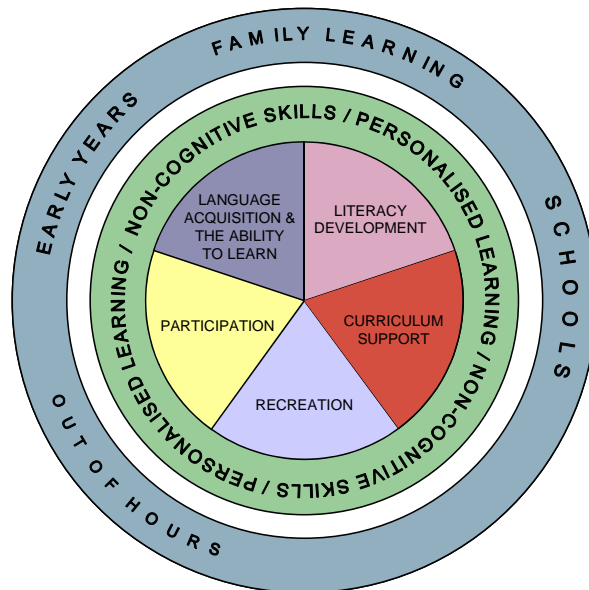
7. **Personalised learning:** if personalised learning is an educational philosophy associated with user-centred learning and a choice of learning styles and settings, then it has much in common with the 'constructivist' notion of learning that best describes the learning activities that take place in museums, libraries and archives.

As the seven components of the offer above imply, they are associated with four distinct service settings for museum, library and archive activities with children and young people:

- **Early years:** pre-school activities
- **Family learning:** settings in which parents and carers learn together with children
- **Schools:** including outreach activities in the classroom as well as school trips and visits
- **Out of (school) hours:** after school settings, holiday activities for school age children and young people, and work with those excluded from formal education

The components of a museum, library and archive offer for children and young people and how they relate to the four service settings across the sector is outlined in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The components and service settings of a museum, library and archive offer for children and young people



Source: BOP (2006)

5.2 Fit with current policy for children and young people

The components of the museums, libraries and archives offer for children and young people can be mapped against current policy for children and young people.

5.2.1 ECM outcomes

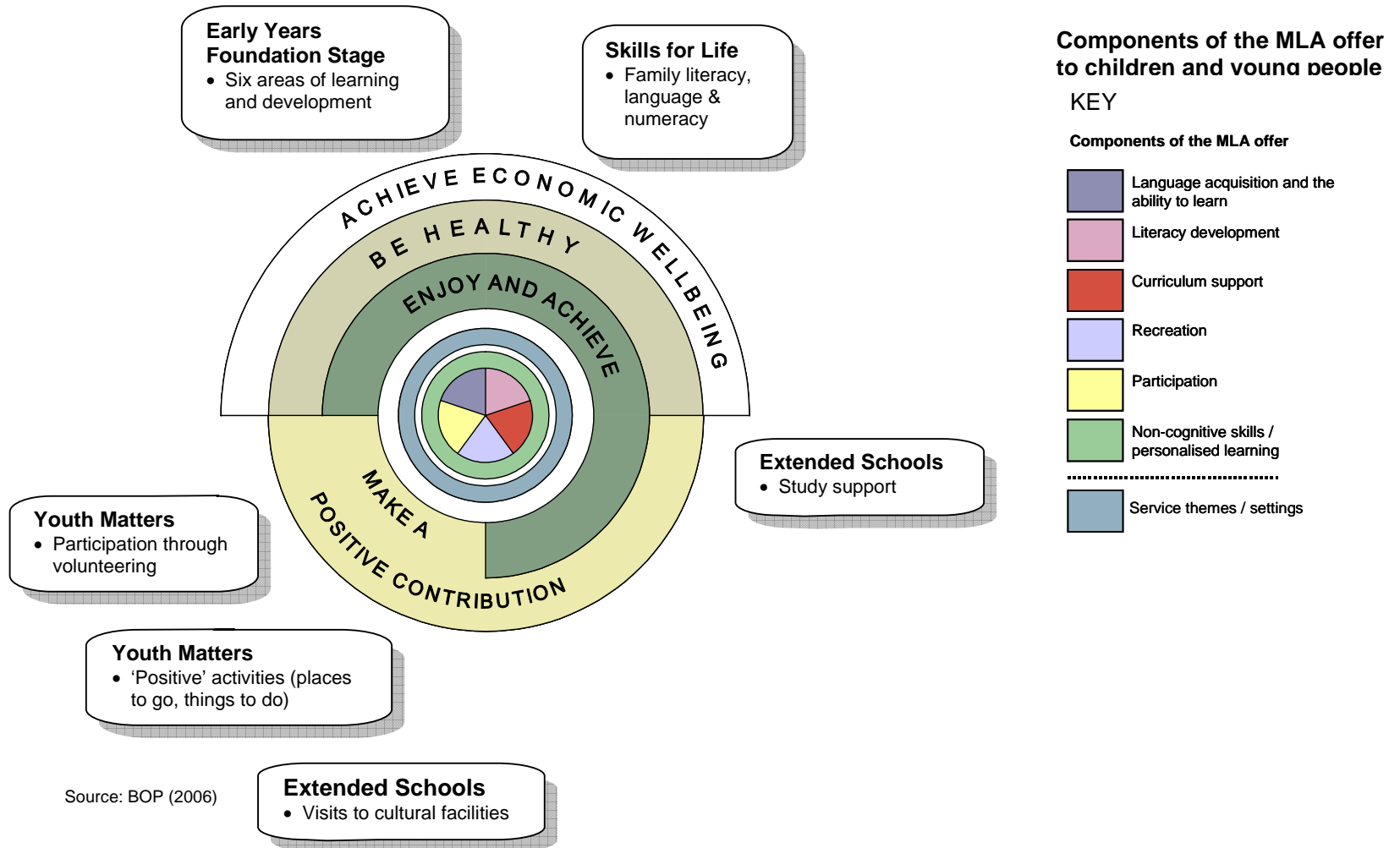
- **Enjoy and Achieve:** the activities of museums, libraries and archives with children and young people relate most closely to this ECM outcome. This is unsurprising as it is the outcome that is most clearly aligned with the core mission of museums, libraries and archives – and indeed, of the wider cultural sector as a whole. It is reflected in the evidence base, which is far stronger for Enjoy and Achieve than for other ECM outcomes. There is evidence, in particular, with regard to early years work on language development and literacy, non-cognitive skill formation in general, and in relation to recreational visits.
- **Make a Positive Contribution:** as outlined above in Section 5.1, evidence related to how museums, libraries and archives help children and young people to make a positive contribution does not exist as yet. However, if museums, libraries and archives are to improve their engagement with young people in particular (as opposed to children), then the direct experience that institutions in the sector can provide in relation to volunteering and involvement in decision-making will be key.
- **Be Healthy:** it is likely that it is possible to evidence the contribution that some activities within the sector make towards the health and well-being outcomes of children and young people, particularly in relation to mental and emotional development within pre-school children. However, the most detailed research and evaluation of these activities has, to-date, chosen instead to focus on cognitive and non-cognitive skill formation. This means that at present it is only really possible to *infer* health outcomes based on the evidence.
- **Achieve Economic Well-Being:** it is more difficult to evidence how interaction with museums, libraries and archives helps children and young people to achieve economic well being. In part, this is simply a factor of time, in that it is difficult to track how any effects on children translate into economic outcomes in the labour market in later life (and this is not a problem that is unique to museums, libraries and archives). But it is also difficult because the impacts of museums, libraries and archives are intermediate to economic outcomes. For example, in some instances you can show that the sector can help young people to develop their ‘human capital’ (e.g. through improved communication or team-working skills). These skills have a value within the labour market and are considered to be important for economic development more generally (section 4.4) – but this is not the purpose or the direct result of the original activity.

It should also be remembered that the ECM outcomes are used as the outcome framework for the Local Area Agreement block on children and young people (i.e. mapping the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people against ECM outcomes also covers the LAA process).

Figure 3 below illustrates how each of the ECM outcomes relates to the components of the offer for children and young people described in Section 5.1 (and Figure 2) above. In Figure 3, the outcomes closest to the centre are those for which there is the strongest link to the activities of museums, libraries or archives. The position of each outcome also reflects which components it is most closely aligned with.

Thus, 'Enjoy and Achieve' is most relevant to the sector's activities, and spans the widest range of components, including recreation, curriculum support, literacy development, language acquisition and (to some extent) participation.

Figure 3: Mapping the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people (C&YP) against current C&YP policy



5.2.2 Youth Matters

As Figure 3 above illustrates, the components of the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people can also be mapped against the new Youth Matters proposals, with particular relevance to the opportunities that the sector can provide for volunteering and other positive activities.

5.2.3 Relevant DfES policies

Figure 3 above also shows the fit between the components and service settings of the museum, library and archive offer for children and young people and relevant DfES policies (though many of these are still embryonic/emerging):

- **Early Years Foundation Stage:** early years work in public libraries should address the six areas of learning and development in the new framework
- **Skills for Life:** overlapping with their early years work, public libraries also play a role in family literacy and language programmes
- **Extended schools:** museums, libraries and archives have a role to play both in terms of enjoyment (via visits to cultural facilities) and achievement (study support)

6 Conclusions and recommendations from national review of museum, library and archive activities with children and young people

The framework of ECM and YM, and the structure of Children's Trusts set up to deliver them, reflect their origins in two major streams of child and family policy: the protection of vulnerable young people in particular, and a programme of universal and preventative services, with roots in a range of area-based initiatives. As such, this is reflective of many of the areas where cultural and social policy meet in the UK; there is a specific set of goals around combating social exclusion on the one hand, and a wider and sometimes more diffuse agenda about the relevance of these activities for everyone on the other.

Given the emphasis on partnership working and holistic service delivery in ECM and YM, there is a major opportunity for cultural agencies in general, and museums, libraries and archives in particular, to become involved in developing integrated service provision for one of their major constituencies: children and young people. This is an opportunity that needs to be grasped by museums, libraries and archives, and their ability to do so is in part, but only in part, dependent on their articulation of a stronger evidence base around social impacts.

Developing that evidence base has been a major focus of this report and our analysis of both national and international literature, and of material specific to the North West, suggests that:

- There is a growing literature that attests to the effects of cultural activities in developing 'non cognitive' skills such as dependability or perseverance, as well as other 'soft' skills such as communication skills, team working and co-operation.
- There is a strong argument that these attributes can be as important as academic qualifications in ensuring success in the job market and in other aspects of life.
- It appears to be the case that the majority of these (and other) extrinsic benefits result from prolonged or habitual interaction with organisations such as museums, libraries and archives. Museums, libraries and archives therefore need to be embedded within the wider provision of services for children and young people – to encourage exactly this kind of prolonged and habitual use.
- Surveys attest to the fact that children and young people derive enjoyment from museum, library and archive-related activities, and there is evidence that this enjoyment is related to improved educational outcomes.

Museums, libraries and archives respond to both cultural and social policy, and this underpins the unique contribution that they can make to services for children. The extrinsic benefits they deliver in terms of improved human and social capital are related to the intrinsic benefits

they deliver in terms of enjoyment, self-expression and education. Social engagement complements their core mission as cultural institutions.

Of the five broad outcomes of ECM:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well Being

we would argue that museums, libraries and archives have a particularly strong role to play around enjoyment and achievement and making a positive contribution, delivered both via learning outcomes such as literacy development and language acquisition, and also through 'social' outcomes such as increased participation.

6.1 Recommendations for improving the evidence base

The review of literature and evidence in the North West shows that there is no lack of evaluations and research currently being conducted at the local level by museums, libraries and archives themselves. However, there are limitations to the value of much of this evidence base – some of which can be overcome, some of which are intractable.

1. **Improving evidence locally.** Issues such as ensuring better transparency in presentation, greater clarity of objectives and definitions, and more standardised and comprehensive use of quantitative evidence can, in theory, be addressed through improving the skills base of practitioners in the sector. But there are real issues to do with the capacity of individual institutions to be able to take on this agenda.
2. **Improving evidence nationally/regionally.** Many of the issues that have been highlighted in the review of evidence can only be tackled on a larger scale. Issues such as the need for more longitudinal research, the use of baselines, control groups and larger samples, and the need to establish thresholds and benchmarks for much of the work in the sector – e.g. how much participation is required to produce demonstrable effects, is 75% of school children 'enjoying themselves' too little or sufficient? – calls for well-funded, large scale research that is independent from any one institution.

Thus, MLA – as the sector lead body – has to act at national and regional level to address these issues.

1. **At local/regional level.** MLA's recent review of the implementation of the Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) shows that the GLOs have added most value to practitioners' and institutions' work where they were supported by regional agencies and/or through peer learning. MLA's subsequent idea to facilitate regional 'learning circles' to

support further use of the GLOs could provide the kind of forum through which improved practice and skills for undertaking research and evaluation could be delivered.

2. **At national level.** MLA has a specific remit here to develop evidence of the impact or outcomes of activities within museums, libraries and archives. There are a number of ways in which this could be undertaken in relation to children and young people.
 - **Museum, library and archive sector development programmes** such as Renaissance in the Regions and Framework for the Future are national in scope, longitudinal in duration and have some discretionary expenditure. This means that within the sector, they are the best place from which the more fundamental research and evaluation that is required to demonstrate the outcomes of the sector can be resourced and overseen. This would differ from the short term imperatives of performance and service delivery that more typically drive project-based evaluations and research in museums, libraries and archives.
 - **Working with partners outside the sector.** MLA should investigate the possibilities for joint working with partners from outside the museum, library and archive sector to address the need for more fundamental and longer term research. In particular, this should involve the UK's higher education community. To this end, MLA could pursue the possibilities for establishing research programmes, studentships and other mechanisms for funding/facilitating research with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Both of these recommendations could apply as 'across the board' recommendations for MLA in terms of its overall role in improving the evidence base for the sector. Specific recommendations for priority areas for children and young people that emerge from the present review include the following:

- **Early years.** The Bookstart evaluation shows the positive impact of the programme on both cognitive and non-cognitive skill development in early years. However, there are some limitations to the research to-date – some generic, and some that relate specifically to its value for the museums, libraries and archives sector. Firstly, the sample in the study was relatively small (49) and the findings would have more weight if they were repeated on a much larger scale. Secondly, much of the evidence related to Bookstart concerns the general benefits of stimulating parents and carers to read together with their children, principally at home. Therefore, within Bookstart, public libraries are key to delivering the objectives of the programme, but mainly in terms of their role as catalyst and issuer of the Bookstart book packs. The benefits of public libraries' additional early years work, in which the library plays a more active and leading role (Rhyme Time, Storytime etc.) is as yet unknown, even though these activities have become a near universal offer.
- While a longitudinal tracking study with a control group (e.g. as used in the Bookstart research) would be valuable in determining the long

term benefits of public libraries' additional early years work, there are more pragmatic 'quick wins' that MLA could consider commissioning. In particular, there is no national baseline information regarding the early years services that are currently offered in public libraries and, more importantly, of the take-up of this provision (both parents and children). Secondly, MLA may consider commissioning a survey of parents and carers of children that participate in public library early years activities such as Rhyme Time, to establish their views on the benefits of provision and how it has affected their overall engagement with, and attitudes towards, the sector. Given the close relationship with health services and public libraries' early years provision, the survey could also include a sample of health workers to use as a check and balance for the findings from parents and carers.

- **Family learning.** As the review of the literature attests, there are demonstrable benefits to family learning, and there is evidence that the sector is involved with the delivery of family learning programmes. However, there is currently little more that one can say on the subject with any great degree of certainty. More comprehensive information is required on the sector's basic involvement with the delivery of family learning activity, as well as research that highlights the distinctive benefits that museums, libraries and archives can offer as settings for family learning programmes.
- **Curriculum support.** Again, there are gaps in the evidence base related to both the scale and scope of service provision in this area, as well as the impact that these activities have on longer term educational attainment. However, as the review of literature illustrates, achieving the latter is a significant undertaking and MLA should firstly establish better baseline data on the former. Also, it is likely that this area of activity will be influenced by how the emerging 'personalised learning' agenda develops. In the short term then, MLA should continue to engage with its stakeholders, particularly DfES, about how museums, libraries and archives can be a part of the personalised learning agenda when/if it actually translates into more concrete proposals for children and young people.
- **Recreation and participation.** As the literature demonstrates, museums, libraries and archives can make a convincing case that they provide enjoyable experiences for children and young people – with the caveat that too often, immediate expressions of enjoyment does not translate into repeat visits/participation. Also, the weight of evidence in this area currently relates to children, as opposed to young people. But it is specifically in relation to providing 'places to go' and 'things to do' for young people that the sector will have to evidence its potential contribution to YM in the immediate future. Similarly, there is a gap in the evidence base regarding the role of young people's volunteering in the sector, both in relation to working directly within museums, libraries and archives, as well as through community projects in which institutions in the sector are involved as partners. Lastly, the involvement of young people in the design of services has transformed from being an area of good practice to being one of mandatory requirement (which therefore needs more comprehensive data and evidence to track). In short, MLA needs to

consider how it can best position the sector across the board in relation to the recently announced Youth Matters proposals, including what this means for improving the evidence base.

- **Non-cognitive skills.** The evidence related to museum, library and archive activities for children and young people often refers to the development of what are variously termed ‘emotional and social development’, ‘non-cognitive skills’, ‘emotional intelligence’, ‘social learning’, ‘self confidence’ and ‘life skills’. If these attributes are pivotal to understanding how the intrinsic benefits that museums, libraries and archives provide for children and young people relate to extrinsic benefits, then the sector would be better served by a more common vocabulary and/or a clearer understanding of the distinctions between one term and another, and how each of these facets of human capital map onto a number of distinct extrinsic benefits (e.g. employability or better mental health).

The ultimate goal of improving the evidence base is to demonstrate positive outcomes for children and young people through their engagement with museums, libraries and archives. Once evidence of outcomes can be plausibly shown through large-scale research and evaluation, data and information activities can focus in a lighter touch way on evidence of activity. In turn, this will help to develop a better series of quantitative indicators for the sector, specifically in relation to being able to illustrate to government and other service providers how museums, libraries and archives are delivering positive outcomes for children and young people.

6.2 Recommendations for improving engagement with local partners

It needs to be stated that producing better evidence is only part of the story. Beyond that, there is a need for museums, libraries and archives to engage more widely and more intensively with other public sector partners at the local level to help *shape* policy regarding children and young people, and in turn determine the kind of measurement frameworks which they feel better capture their particular contribution.

The door is open in this respect with the policy shift in local governance towards multi-agency working around common outcomes for defined groups – all of which can be seen within ECM. DfES policies are also seeking to effect a physical joining-up of services in designated settings for children and young people, particularly children’s centres and schools. This means that museums, libraries and archives have to consider how this clustering of services around particular physical hubs will affect their delivery for children and young people; in terms of outreach, capital programmes and the involvement of young people within service planning processes.

There is, therefore, a major opportunity for museums, libraries and archives to become involved in joint working for delivering services and activities for children and young people. The literature review has

highlighted a few instances where this is already happening, and Section 8 below illustrates this further in relation to the specific context of the North West region, where Government Office is co-ordinating a network of public sector agencies to work together with its four regional Children's Services Advisors, and local authorities in the region. There are also a range of regional initiatives, from Liverpool's Capital of Culture in 2008 to Building Schools for the Future in Lancashire, that offer opportunities for greater engagement. Section 8 below offers specific recommendations for improving engagement with other service providers and strategic bodies in the region.

But museums, libraries and archives need to be realistic about this engagement. The ECM/YM agenda is led by the main providers of services such as schools and the health service, as well as the agencies that deal with vulnerable young people, such as criminal justice and social care. Cultural agencies have a particular offer to make here; but they should not attempt to address the whole agenda of ECM, with its 25 aims ranging from improved sexual health to better access to transport, and its variety of 'targets', from reduced suicide rates to anti-bullying measures.

Rather, the 'offer' developed in Section 3 of this report focuses on where the particular strengths museums, libraries and archives lie and how these contribute to the wider objectives of policy for children and young people at local, regional and national level. It is intended to help the sector distil and articulate the range of activities and the kinds of outcomes that it can offer for children and young people, in a language – and with reference to a policy environment – that other public sector partners can identify with.

Although the parameters of policy for children and young people are set centrally, it is important to note that how this is operationalised on the ground will vary at both the local and regional level. The present research has illustrated how this operates within one region, the North West. It then makes recommendations for how MLA North West together with other partners, such as Renaissance North West and Arts Council North West, can improve their joint working within this specific, North West policy context. Replicating this work in another region would necessarily require a similar process of detailed organisational/policy mapping and engagement to be undertaken.

Thus the overall goal of the present research is to review the evidence with a view to helping to support museums, libraries and archives in engaging with other public sector partners, to ensure that the sector achieves the prominence it deserves within the changing landscape of children and young people's services.

7 Regional literature review of the evidence of museum, library and archive activities with children and young people in the North West

The following section is a review of literature relating to museums, libraries and archives in the North West, their work with children and young people, and the relevance of this work to Every Child Matters, Youth Matters and related government policies affecting children and young people. It is intended to complement the review of national policy and literature.

The literature reviewed in this section includes published research, consultancy reports, project evaluations, online information and a range of other 'grey literature', including individual project briefings and case studies.

The literature that was sourced and obtained includes literature that was:

- provided by members of the Steering Group
- provided by other contacts and stakeholders suggested by the Steering Group
- suggested by interviewees during the consultation process
- sourced through desk research
- sourced through the research team's existing knowledge and contacts
- sourced through a search of academic databases
- provided in response to a specific request for relevant material that was made through email newsgroups by MLA North West.

Relevant literature is presented below against each of the five outcome areas of Every Child Matters, plus Youth Matters, Early Years and Family Learning, and Extended Schools. Documents that relate to more than one domain or policy area may appear more than once.

7.1 Summary of findings

From the review of the literature on the work of museums, libraries and archives in the North West with children and young people, the following general observations can be made.

- The evidence for museums, libraries and archives activity with children and young people relates most strongly to two of the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes, specifically 'Enjoy And Achieve' and 'Make A Positive Contribution'.
- In terms of domains, the evidence of the contribution that museums, libraries and archives in the North West make to the

ECM outcomes is far stronger with regard to libraries, and museums and galleries, than for archives.

- Further, the activities of public libraries are currently more closely aligned with Every Child Matters and Youth Matters than those of museums and galleries. This relates to factors such as the role of libraries within local authorities, their location in communities, and increasing links with other agencies such as Connexions and Primary Care Trusts.
- Much of the available evidence takes the form of case studies and project evaluations. These describe relevant activities, and demonstrate that the museums, libraries and archives sector in the North West has a good track record of working with children and young people. But they suffer from the general problems related to case study evidence in this sector that was highlighted in the *New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives* report (BOP, 2005). See Appendix 12 for a more detailed discussion of these issues.
- In a related point – and as with the national evidence for museums, galleries and libraries – research on impacts and outcomes is relatively limited, particularly in terms of longitudinal work that captures outcomes over time. For this reason, much of this narrative literature review is concerned with evidence of shorter-term impact, and evidence of activity.
- Many of the project evaluations that are discussed in the literature review deal with only small numbers of children or young people.
- The primary focus of much of the literature is on organisational and institutional outcomes for museums, libraries and archives – for example, developing the capacity of staff or attracting more young people as visitors. This is an important element of how the sector is working to improve service delivery, but it needs to be combined with greater attention to recording the needs and attainment of children and young people themselves.
- There is evidence that the museums, libraries and archives sector – and libraries in particular – are becoming more strategic about working in partnership with other agencies and sectors. This indicates potential for the sector to work with Children's Trusts, and other providers of services to children and young people, to contribute to the aims and objectives of Every Child Matters and Youth Matters.

7.2 Every Child Matters

7.2.1 Enjoy and achieve

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museums, libraries and archives activity in the North West that relates to the ECM outcome 'Enjoy and Achieve'. The most relevant examples are discussed in the commentary that follows.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
MLA North West Cultural Entitlement, Gateways to Learning, Final Report, Cheshire, Halton & Warrington, March 2005 – March 2006	MLA North West, Cheshire CC, Halton BC, Warrington BC	evaluation	2006
Museum Fever and Represent	re:source [MLA], NW Museums Service and West Midlands Regional Museums Council	report	
Making Science More Real: an Evaluation of Microbes and Medicine	Manchester Museum & Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester	evaluation	2004
Primary Consultant (Museums and Galleries) with Manchester Education Partnership – Interim Report	Centre for Education and Industry at University of Warwick for Manchester Hub and Manchester Education Partnership	report	2005
Where Are They Now? The Impact of the MGLI	CLMG, DfES	report	
Haworth Art Gallery and Rossendale Museum Partnership Project Evaluation Report	Haworth Art Gallery, Rossendale Museum	evaluation	2006
Submerged Evaluation Report	Tameside Museums & Galleries	evaluation	2004
Literacy and Social Inclusion: The Policy Challenge (case study of Start Singing at Tullie House Museum, Carlisle)	National Literacy Trusy & The Basic Skills Agency	discussion paper	2004
Education Programme Delivery Plan – Evaluation Report 2004-5	Renaissance North West	evaluation	2005
Final Report on the Impact of Phase 2 of the MGEP (Volume 2) <i>Section 5: Projects funded through the NWMLAC</i>	Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick	evaluation	2004
Bradley Green Museum Club, Spring Term 06	Tameside Museums and Galleries Service	evaluation	2006
Alive With Learning: Study Support in Museums And Galleries	Education Extra	report	
Canals Then & Now Evaluation 2004 Overall Results	Tameside Museums and Galleries Service	evaluation results	2004

Celebration! Portland Basin Museum. Schools Workshop Evaluation Results	Tameside Museums and Galleries Service	evaluation results	2006
CLEO Video Conferencing Pilot with Lancashire Museum Service, Evaluation Report	Lancaster University	evaluation	2005
Museum Development Fund Evaluation Report	Abbot Hall Art Gallery	evaluation	2005
Learning Links: Nature's Treasures	Lancashire County Museum Service	evaluation	
Towneley Hall Art Gallery & Museums, Cultural Entitlement Project		evaluation	2006
Libraries			
Homeless Families Play and Learning Project	Tameside Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service, MLA	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton Daemons Wargaming Club	Halton Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton's Proposal	Halton Library Service	briefing note	
Promoting Fun Online Educational Activities to Primary School Children	Blackburn with Darwen Library & Information Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Animate	Cheshire County Council	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Time to Read – Examples of Reader Development Work from North West Libraries 2001 - 2004	NW Libraries Reader Development Partnership	report	2004
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	briefing note	
Archives			
Cheshire and Chester Archives Learning Links Evaluation	Cheshire Record Office	evaluation/briefing note	2006
School's Out: Records for Teaching at Lancashire Record Office. Final Project Evaluation	Lancashire Record Office	evaluation	2006
Final Report on the Impact of Phase 2 of the MGEP (Volume 2) <i>Section 5: Projects funded through the NWMLAC</i>	Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick	evaluation	2004
MLA North West Cultural Entitlement, Gateways to Learning, Final Report, Cheshire, Halton & Warrington, March 2005 – March 2006	MLA North West, Cheshire CC, Halton BC, Warrington BC	evaluation	2006
Working with Geographically	Cumbria Record Office	briefing note	2006

Isolated Schools			
Life on the Edge: The Struggle to Survive	Cumbria Archive Service/Cumbria Record Office	briefing note	2006
Report/Evaluation of a Recent School Visit	Cumbria Record Office	briefing note	2006

'Enjoy and Achieve' has a strong focus on schooling (being prepared for, attending and attaining at school), but also focuses on personal and social development and the enjoyment of recreation (including culture and sport). Enjoy and Achieve is one of two ECM outcomes with which museums, libraries and archives are most closely aligned (the other being 'make a positive contribution'). This is reflected in the wide range of literature in the North West from all MLA domains showing evidence of activity and impact that relates to this strand of the ECM framework (see table above).

Enjoyment

There is a large volume of literature from the North West providing evidence that children and young people enjoy attending museums, libraries and archives and using their services. This is unsurprising, as enjoyment and recreation are part of the core mission of the sector (and the wider cultural sector as a whole). All domains provide good evidence that the sector provides enjoyable experiences, although the evidence from museums and galleries is strongest and most extensive. This reflects the nature of the material reviewed, as there were more project evaluations from the museums and galleries sector, and most of these measure enjoyment in some form.

The strength of the evidence base here also reflects the relative ease of measurement. Even the most rudimentary evaluation generally asks participants whether they enjoyed themselves, or asks them to rate the experience on a scale of 'good' or 'bad'. It is also an easily understood concept for those providing feedback – including young children¹⁰. An increasing number of evaluations now use the GLO framework, which includes a category for recording levels of Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity.

For example, in the MGEP2 project Merseyside Industry Archives Project, 75% of pupils rated the experience as enjoyable; in Playing Up at Tatton Park, 62% "enjoyed the project a lot" (CEI, 2004). While there is room for improvement in this type of measurement¹¹, it does enable the sector to quantify levels of enjoyment to some degree.

¹⁰ Some evaluations ask younger children to choose between an illustration of a happy face and an unhappy face to indicate whether they enjoyed an experience, for example.

¹¹ While it is useful for the sector to be able to quantify levels of enjoyment in this way, it is difficult to ensure that GLOs are used and measured consistently across different projects and institutions, which makes the aggregation of data problematic. Further difficulties arise from a lack of benchmarks and baseline data to indicate what a 'normal' or 'good' level of enjoyment would be.

Museums, libraries and archives in the North West can therefore demonstrate that they meet aims and targets related to the enjoyment aspect of 'Enjoy and Achieve', including the enjoyment of recreation and the take-up of cultural opportunities by children and young people. And as we have seen in the review of national and international literature (4.4.1), enjoyment is not only considered to be important for its own sake, but also because levels of enjoyment correlate with the achievement of learning outcomes.

Achievement

Despite the twin components of this ECM outcome, the main emphasis of 'Enjoy and Achieve' is actually achievement, particularly in school and education. The targets and indicators identified by Ofsted for the Enjoy and Achieve area of the ECM framework include levels of achievement by students at key points throughout early years, primary and secondary education, and the attainment of a range of learning goals related to the national curriculum.

There is a large volume of literature containing evidence of the role of museums, libraries and archives in the North West in providing opportunities for education and learning for children and young people, across all domains. Along with enjoyment and recreation, learning and education are central to the sector's involvement with children and young people. Typically, learning activities promote one or more of the following:

- literacy development and reading skills
- subject learning, including curriculum support
- non-cognitive or 'soft' skills.

Literacy development and reading skills

The evidence of the impact of museums, libraries and archives in the North West on literacy development in children and young people relates largely to projects and initiatives directed at early years and foundation-stage children. This ties into some of the aims of 'enjoy and achieve', specifically that children and young people should be 'ready for school' and that 'early years provision promotes children's development and well-being and helps them meet early learning goals' (DfES, 2005). Because this aspect of 'enjoy & achieve' is also relevant to wider government education policy on early years and family learning, the literature relating to this subject is discussed in 7.4.1 below.

The literature also includes several examples of museums, libraries and archives in the region that contribute to the development of literacy in older children. The Magpie Programme developed by the Primary Consultant (Museums and Galleries) as part of Renaissance in the Regions, for instance, worked with twelve schools and five Renaissance North West hub museums and galleries to develop Key Stage 2 writing skills. Attainment data for participating pupils is not included in the interim report, but will be included in the final evaluation, and should provide

evidence of the degree to which participation in the museums, libraries and archives project improved pupils' literacy skills beyond the levels that would otherwise be expected (Stanley, J, 2005).

While there is an obvious link between libraries, books and therefore literacy, however, the link between museums and literacy is not so obvious. Research for the Renaissance North West's Education Programme Delivery Plan found that 39% of teachers could see no link between museums and literacy, and 26% saw no link with English (Renaissance North West, 2004).

Subject learning and curriculum support: libraries

The available literature suggests that educational delivery for children and young people in libraries in the North West is predominantly focused on literacy development, both at early years and for older age groups. There was relatively little evidence of the direct delivery of curriculum-based subject learning in libraries. However, libraries do play an important role in providing study support and resources to aid self-directed learning in curriculum subjects by children and young people. This is discussed in more detail in section 7.4.2 below.

The Literature Matters initiative is a national scheme designed to foster closer links between schools and libraries (both school and public library services). It arranges placements for trainee teachers with library services, with the aim of increasing teachers' knowledge of library systems, and concomitantly, librarians' knowledge of schools. In the North West, over 450 student teachers have taken part, the majority of whom were preparing to teach in secondary schools, in a range of subjects, but predominantly English.

Subject learning and curriculum support: museums, galleries and archives

The literature demonstrates that the museums, libraries and archives sector in the North West is taking an increasingly sophisticated approach to working with schools. In particular, there is a relatively large (and recent) body of evidence relating to the work of museums, galleries and archives with schools. This describes how the sector has sought to increase levels of involvement with schools, and shows that museum, gallery and archive learning projects are increasingly designed to correspond to the requirements of the national curriculum.

A number of strategic funding initiatives have been important drivers in the development of curriculum support activities. These include the following MLA-backed programmes:

- **Museums and Galleries Education Programme (MGEP).** The second phase of this national programme ran between 2002 and 2004, and focused on supporting learning in schools, particularly with regard to the national curriculum.

- **Renaissance in the Regions.** Includes a commitment to developing a 'comprehensive and integrated service to schools'; at the regional level this is outlined in Renaissance North West's Education Programme Delivery Plan.
- **Cultural Entitlement Programme.** Supporting non-hub museums' and archives' work with schools by developing learning packages relevant to the national curriculum with previously 'non-participating' schools. The Learning Links strand funded teacher placements in museums and archives.

Much of the literature reviewed evaluates these initiatives, or individual projects funded by them.

The evaluation of MGEP2 (Stanley, J et al, 2004), for example, includes a detailed overview of four projects in North West museums, galleries and archives. Between them, these projects developed national curriculum-based learning resources for: Key Stages 2 and 3 History and Social History, Key Stage 3 Science, Key Stages 3 and 4 English/Literature, plus further learning in literacy, numeracy, creativity. An additional project focusing on Key Stage 3 Citizenship involved 4 museums, 2 archives and 9 secondary schools in the region. In total, 69 schools participated in the project, accounting for 2,318 pupils (Stanley, J et al, 2004). Each of these projects identified increased learning within subject areas as a key aim, and used feedback questionnaires from pupils and teachers to gauge levels of learning, as well as other factors such as interest, enjoyment, confidence and quality of the learning resources that had been developed. Beyond this kind of feedback, it is difficult to 'prove' the degree to which learning outcomes are achieved in activities of this kind, without some form of test or examination. However, participating teachers were broadly pleased with the content.

Similarly, the Gateways to Learning Final Report (Halton Borough Council, 2006) evaluates the Cultural Entitlement programme in Cheshire, Halton and Warrington, and provides a detailed overview of the ten learning projects developed by non-hub museums, galleries and archives that were funded by the scheme¹². Each project developed new learning packages to use with schools, with the majority geared closely to the national curriculum. Over 2,000 pupils and young people were involved in the programme, and all were from schools that had previously been regarded as not participating with the museums, libraries and archives sector.

The literature shows that teachers value such projects. The research carried out for the Education Programme Delivery Plan found that teachers "notice changes in behaviour, group dynamics and academic performance after museum visits"¹³. (Renaissance North West, 2004) This study also highlighted the importance of expert educators, facilitators

¹² Although this programme was developed with the aim of "supporting the delivery of Every Child Matters Key Outcome 4 'Make a Positive Contribution to Society[sic]" (Halton Borough Council, 2006), the main outputs of each of the participating projects correspond more closely to Enjoy & Achieve.

¹³ Based on focus groups held with 71 teachers throughout the North West.

or curators from museums, libraries and archives who can provide an alternative perspective to the classroom teacher. Similarly, the report on the Magpie project highlights how "Teachers recognised that museum educators had something special to offer pupils" (Stanley, J, 2005).

The literature also demonstrates that it is good – and increasingly standard – practice for museums, libraries and archives and schools to collaborate on the design and specification of education projects. Close co-operation ensures that learning programmes are tailored to the needs of pupils and the national curriculum, and will therefore be more likely to contribute to improving pupils' performance. The Learning Links programme funded teacher placements in museums, galleries and archives, and enabled museum, library and archive staff to gain an increased understanding of the needs of schools. The School's Out project at Lancashire Record Office (LRO), for example, created learning worksheets for Key Stage 3 geography students based on archive materials, selected with the assistance of a teacher on placement. The 'teacher's-eye view' was considered vital to LRO's understanding of how best to exploit its resources in this way (LRO, 2006).

Non-cognitive or soft skills

In addition to its involvement in subject learning and curriculum support, there is also evidence in the literature from the North West of the sector's role in encouraging the development of non-cognitive or soft skills. In practice, museum, library and archive projects often aim to develop both cognitive and non-cognitive skills. In the Museums and Galleries Education Programme, for example, the aims of the Merseyside Industry Archives Project were to aid the study of Key Stage 3 Learning, and to increase self-esteem, self-confidence and positive attitudes in learners (Stanley, J et al, 2004). In the Book Power project, participating early years children gained basic reading and language skills, but also learned how to share, take turns, listen attentively and interact with the storyteller (Gabbatt, J, 2005).

Non-cognitive skills are difficult to measure, particularly when trying to assess the impact of one activity or set of activities on their development. They are also not the main focus of 'Enjoy and Achieve' section of the ECM framework. The development of self-confidence, for example, is an aim of Make a Positive Contribution, and is discussed in 7.2.2 below.

Gaps and issues in the evidence relating to Enjoy and Achieve

One of the difficulties in trying to relate museums', libraries' and archives' work with schools to the ECM framework is very difficult to demonstrate a tangible link between pupils' participation in museum, library and archive learning projects and their improved performance in terms of the relevant ECM targets and indicators – the percentage of pupils achieving specific levels of attainment in key subjects at each developmental stage. This would always be difficult to prove, as so many factors are involved, and it is debatable whether individual museums or libraries should ever be expected to attempt to demonstrate any such cause and effect. (There is, however, a potential need here for long-term, independent research projects carried out by external academic bodies such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council.) But there is room for improvement in the evidence of the impact of museums, libraries and archives in the North West on educational achievement. While the sector may not be able to demonstrate a direct, causal link to improvements in students' exam results, it does need to be able to make a convincing case to local authorities that working with museums, libraries and archives can help schools to meet *their* ECM and other targets. Schools do have systems of measurement and inspection in place, and if they believe that museums, libraries and archives can help them to meet their targets, they will be more inclined to work with them.

At present, the literature tends to consist of individual project evaluations, which are relatively limited in scope, and rarely extend beyond the duration of the project itself. That is, there is a lack of longitudinal studies that track pupils' progress over time, after involvement in museum, library and archive learning programmes. This is partly due to resources: neither teachers nor museum, library and archive staff tend to have the time or funding to carry out such tasks. Another issue, however, is that evaluations often seem to be carried out on pilot projects at the developmental stage, but are not continued to the same degree when learning programmes are rolled out more widely.

In many cases, there is also room for improvement in the design and delivery of evaluation processes. Many projects don't adequately gather baseline data and information before projects commence, making it more difficult to gauge the impact of participation. Similarly, it is rare for evaluations to include a control group, against which the performance of participants can be compared. Too many evaluations also present a selection of positive quotations derived from interviews and feedback forms, but with a lack of quantitative or qualitative data that would give some indication of how representative the quotes really are.

This is not true in all cases. The evaluation of Nature's Treasures with Lancashire County Museum Service documents the collection of baseline data, for example. The evaluation of Book Power by Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Service compares the performance of two different age groups to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the programme. The full report on the Magpie programme by the University of Warwick will include an analysis of improvements in

attainment in writing, taking into account the extent to which different classes are comparable, and performance in writing SATs etc. (Stanley, J, 2005). But this kind of approach needs to become more widespread.

Another issue is that many project evaluations are focused primarily on the impact of learning programmes on museums, libraries and archives themselves (visitor numbers, CPD of museums staff etc.), rather than impacts on participating children and young people. The interim report on Magpie highlights this point:

It is worth noting that none of the subordinate objectives which were defined in the documentation for Magpie specify targets for pupil attainment or indeed mention attainment. Rather they set out objectives for teachers, lead practitioners and museum and gallery educational staff (Stanley, J, 2005)

This may be understandable, but if the sector is to engage more closely with the ECM agenda, it would be wise if future evaluations also focus more closely on recording impacts on participants.

The adoption of GLOs across all domains also marks a step forward. They provide a common framework for assessing project outcomes which specifically demands a considered assessment of impacts on participants, teachers and museum, library and archive staff. This provides an opportunity to build up a collective body of evidence in support of the sector. GLOs are currently the best general measurement tool available to museums, libraries and archives, in part because they were specifically designed to meet the needs, characteristics and resources of the sector¹⁴. They are also likely to improve over time, as future revisions and iterations are influenced by practitioners' feedback and wider policy developments. Used in conjunction with other sources of information, such as visitor data, GLOs will contribute to making the case in support of the sector's work with children and young people.

However, the literature review suggests that the use of GLOs is inconsistent, and a number of evaluations do not use the framework to its full potential. GLOs will have the most impact if consistently used well throughout the sector, and that will require leadership from bodies such as MLA and Renaissance North West. In particular, there appears to be a need for more extensive training and better information on the use of GLOs for professionals working in the sector.

7.2.2 Make a Positive Contribution

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that relates to the ECM outcome 'Make a Positive Contribution'. The most relevant examples are discussed in the commentary that follows.

¹⁴ Other methods of assessing outcomes and impacts of museum, library and archive initiatives, as used in long-term academic research projects, may provide more detailed, extensive and nuanced analyses, but are prohibitively expensive and time-consuming for the majority of projects, particularly those that are smaller in scale.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
Where Are They Now? The Impact of the MGLI	CLMG, DfES	report	
Opening the Doors: Museums & Young People	Opening the Doors	report	2004
Museum Fever and Represent	re:source [MLA]	report	
MLA North West Cultural Entitlement, Gateways to Learning, Final Report, Cheshire, Halton & Warrington, March 2005 – March 2006	MLA North West, Cheshire CC, Halton BC, Warrington BC	evaluation	2006
Libraries			
Halton's Proposal	Halton Library Service	briefing note	
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service, MLA	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Homeless Families Play and Learning Project	Tameside Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton Daemons Wargaming Club	Halton Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Animate	Cheshire County Council	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Time to Read – Examples of Reader Development Work from North West Libraries 2001 - 2004	NW Libraries Reader Development Partnership	report	2004
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	briefing note	
Archives			
MLA North West Cultural Entitlement, Gateways to Learning, Final Report, Cheshire, Halton & Warrington, March 2005 – March 2006	MLA North West, Cheshire CC, Halton BC, Warrington BC	evaluation	2006

Make a Positive Contribution is concerned with ensuring that children and young people can engage in activities with wider social and economic 'goods' (e.g. volunteering, getting involved in local decision-making, becoming entrepreneurial), while avoiding those that weaken and damage the social fabric (e.g. offending). After Enjoy and Achieve, this element of the ECM framework relates most closely to the activities of museums, libraries and archives (although, as discussed in 4.4.2 above, the relationship is not quite as close as it may first appear). This outcome is also the primary outcome in relation to the objectives of Youth Matters, which is discussed below (7.3), although the detailed performance

management framework (indicators, legislative judgements and 'illustrative evidence', see section 3.3) have not yet been established for Youth Matters.

The themes of Make a Positive Contribution are closely related to the Government's existing citizenship agenda, which was introduced as a national curriculum subject in 2002. The museum, library and archive sector in the North West has a strong track record in this area, not least through its involvement in phase 2 of the Museums and Galleries Education Programme. Uniquely among regional agencies, the North West made citizenship a priority for MGEP, resulting in six projects, which worked with around 425 pupils. The initiative is seen as "a particularly successful model for MLA North West", with the potential to be rolled out more widely (Stanley, J et al, 2004).

Engaging in decision making

One of the stated aims of Make A Positive Contribution is that children and young people are encouraged to engage in decision making, including voluntary and community engagement. To a large degree, this aim is aligned with other 'civil renewal' initiatives that are ultimately designed to address government concerns about declining political participation among young people (see BOP, 2005). This is why one of the stated indicators relates to taking part in mock general elections in school. But it is also about broader civic engagement and the development of young people as citizens, and their involvement in activities which support the community.

The museum, library and archive sector knows that young people respond well if they are consulted about the services they are expected to use (IPPR 2003), and there is evidence that this principle is being applied in museums and galleries in the North West. In libraries, it is increasingly accepted as good practice to consult young people about the books and services provided for them. Halton Library Service, for example, involved local school students in choosing furnishings and books during the refurbishment of Kingsway Learning Centre. Moss Side Powerhouse also consulted young people during its development and involved them in stock buying trips, as did Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services for its Books on the Edge project.

In museums, allowing learners to have input into the nature of education projects and other services is also regarded as beneficial. In changing the way it presents itself in response to the suggestions of young learners, Salford Museum and Art Gallery was able to demonstrate respect and develop their trust (Where Are They Now?). Acting upon their suggestions is regarded as a way to increase young people's confidence in what they have to say.

Museums, libraries and archives also provide opportunities for voluntary work and mentoring, either at institutions themselves, or through project work. For example, the Halton Daemons club encourages older members to mentor their younger peers, and several members have completed the 'community participation' section of the Duke of Edinburgh award by

volunteering through the club (Halton's Proposal). However, while young people do volunteer in libraries, museums and galleries throughout the North West, it is not clear that their involvement is being captured and quantified across the sector. Better collective evidence of this activity would help museums, libraries and archives to demonstrate their potential contribution to both the 'Make a Positive Contribution' aspect of ECM, and to the YM agenda, and there may be a need to develop a framework and process for capturing this information. If so, this should be informed by the accreditation framework for voluntary work that is currently being developed for YM by DfES in collaboration with the Russell Commission, QCA and LSC. Consultation with key stakeholders in the North West, carried out for this study, indicated that accredited volunteering initiatives are being developed by museums in the region, and if successful these should be highlighted in discussions with Children's Trusts and potential ECM partners.

Developing self-confidence

Developing children's and young people's self-confidence is another aim that falls under the heading of Make a Positive Contribution. It is worth noting that no targets or indicators have been identified for this objective, underlining the difficulty of measuring qualities such as 'confidence'. As the Campaign for Learning in Museums and Galleries has observed, "changes in skills, attitudes and behaviour are never the result of one thing alone but are a mix of influences and trying to disentangle them isn't easy" (CLMG, 2005).

Where claims are made about children's and young people's confidence in the literature reviewed for this study, these tend to be based on the judgement of project co-ordinators or evaluators, or on feedback and case study interviews with participants and teachers. In *Museum Fever and Represent*, for example, it is reported that "a greater sense of confidence and self-belief" is gained by the young people who took part in these projects, based on interviews and focus groups with participants¹⁵.

GLOs may provide a more consistent method of recording the degree to which children's and young people's self-confidence develops during interaction with museums, libraries and archives, even if they are not able to prove the exact causes of that development. The 'Attitudes and Values' element of the framework provides a method of recording how people's opinions about themselves - such as self-esteem - develop. This would be of most value if used on longer-term projects, in which the same cohort of young people participate in a programme over a period of time, and their attitudes and values are assessed before and after taking part.

¹⁵ More extensive studies, on a national level, provide more detailed analysis of this issue. The evaluation of phase 2 of the Museums and Galleries Education Programme (Stanley, J et al, 2004), for instance, records that 80% of participating projects defined 'self esteem' as a learning goal, and that 58% of participating pupils at Key Stage 2 or above (n=3937) reported that they felt more confident as a result of their involvement in a project, whether about a particular activity or in terms of general self-confidence. Results were based on a consistent set of evaluation tools, including entry and exit questionnaires.

However, none of the literature about longer-term projects that was reviewed for this study appears to have used GLOs in this way.

Working with disadvantaged groups

The ECM framework specifically highlights the need to ensure that children and young people who are 'looked after', and 'vulnerable groups', are able to Make a Positive Contribution. The literature concerning a number of projects in the North West demonstrate the museum, library and archive sector's track record in meeting the needs of such groups.

The central aim of the Animate project in Cheshire, for example, is to "make looked after children in Cheshire aware that there are positive outcomes for them as individuals" (casestudies.mla.gov.uk). The project is a partnership between Cheshire County Council Arts Service, Libraries, Education and Social Services, and as such is an example of the kind of joined-up, integrated service delivery that will be delivered by Children's Trusts. The Caring to Read project in Bolton has similar aims and also involves a partnership between library and other services, such as Residential Services (it is managed by the Bolton Literacy Trust).

A number of museum and gallery projects have worked with homeless young people and other 'at risk' groups to develop their confidence and engagement with learning and reading. Museum Fever at Salford Museum and Art Gallery in 2000-2001 was something of a landmark example, which influenced later projects. The project, run in conjunction with the Foyer housing charity for homeless young people, helped to establish principles of good practice, such as arranging initial meetings with young people in their own environment, empowering them to make decisions about the project, and giving them a sense of ownership. It led to a successful exhibition, organised by the participants, that helped them to develop self-confidence (Museum Fever and Represent).

7.2.3 Be Healthy

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that relates to the ECM outcome 'Be Healthy'. These examples are discussed in the commentary that follows.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		
Libraries			
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Homeless Families Play and Learning Project	Tameside Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006

Archives	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		

It is difficult to argue that the museums, libraries and archives sector plays a primary role in meeting the aims of 'Be Healthy', the first of the ECM outcomes. The targets and indicators for Be Healthy are chiefly derived from the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF), which is focused on clinical and healthcare outcomes and practice (DH, DfES, 2004). The research team did not find any literature demonstrating that museums and galleries, libraries or archives in the North West directly contributed to such targets and indicators.

As discussed in the national literature review above, however, it is possible to argue that the sector can make an intermediate contribution to the health and wellbeing of children and young people, as part of an holistic approach. For example, museums, libraries and archives can contribute to the development of literacy and non-cognitive skills that correlate with a reduced incidence of risk taking and behaviours that contribute to ill health. Libraries also have a role to play in health promotion. As key sources of information in the community, they are increasingly working with the health sector, for example by hosting NHS Direct kiosks (The Reading Agency, 2004).

There is some evidence of this kind of activity in the North West. The Moss Side Powerhouse library, for example, stocks a large collection of books for young people on health issues and subjects such as drugs and stress management. There are also examples of library projects working closely with healthcare professionals, as in the Homeless Families Play and Learning Project in Tameside, in which the library service's project team works in partnership with clients' health visitors. This project's evaluation targets include 'Improving Health and Happiness', and 'Improving Safety and Well-Being', and these are addressed in quarterly reports produced for The Children's Fund. However, statistics are only collected on use of library services (numbers joining the library etc.), and it is not clear from the short case study reviewed how improvements to health and well being will be demonstrated (potentially a difficult task). In addition, the main reason for partnering with health visitors is as a means to gain access to hard-to-reach and 'at risk' families and individuals, so it does not necessarily follow that the activity undertaken has direct health benefits, just because health services are involved in the process.

The literature review included only brief case studies of these projects, which did not include any detailed analysis of the impact of activities. No literature was found that looked directly at the health and wellbeing impacts on children and young people of museums, galleries or archives in the North West. However, projects such as those described above can be taken as examples of museums, libraries and archives collaborating successfully with other agencies outside the cultural sector – as they

would be expected to do if more directly involved in the ECM and YM agendas.

7.2.4 Achieve Economic Well-Being

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that relates to the ECM outcome 'Achieve Economic Well-Being'. The most relevant examples are discussed in the commentary that follows.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
Post-16 Continuous Professional Development	Whitworth Art Gallery	report	2004
Museum Fever and Represent	re:source [MLA], NW Museums Service and West Midlands Regional Museums Council	report	
Libraries			
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	briefing	
Everybody's Reading	DCMS/Wolfson Reader Development Challenge Fund	report	2002
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Animate	Cheshire County Council	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton's Proposal	Halton Library Service	briefing note	
Archives	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		

'Achieve Economic Well-Being' focuses on ensuring that children and young people progress to further education, training or employment after leaving school – and enjoy good housing, access to transport and are free from low income.

The literature provides relatively little evidence of the sector's contribution to this ECM outcome. In terms of learning and education, for example, Achieve Economic Well-Being concentrates on opportunities for young people after they have left school. But the majority of museum, library and archive projects in the North West described in the literature focus on working with children and young people who are still attending school.

There are some exceptions. Twelve learners who participated in Museum and Gallery Learning Initiative projects went on to paid or voluntary employment as a result of their involvement, including one participant in

Museum Fever at Salford Museum and Galleries, for example (CLMG, 2005). The Whitworth Art Gallery, with Manchester Museum and Manchester City Galleries, has developed a professional development programme for art tutors working with post-16 students. The Powerhouse Library in Moss Side works closely with local colleges and the Connexions service (housed in the same building) to advise young people about progression routes into employment and further study (casestudies.mla.gov.uk).

In general, however, the literature suggests that the sector is not as closely engaged with young people from 16-19 as it is with younger children.

7.2.5 Stay Safe

No literature was reviewed which contains evidence of museums, libraries and archives activity in the North West that relates *directly* to the ECM outcome 'Stay Safe'.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		
Libraries	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		
Archives	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		

The final ECM outcome, 'Stay Safe', is principally concerned with ensuring that services for children and young people (particularly care services, schools) prevent harm to children and young people. Unsurprisingly, then, the emphasis here is on those children and young people who are most at risk of harm or abuse, including those who are looked after or in care, and those who are on the child protection register. As such, the main targets and indicators for this outcome relate to the work of agencies such as Youth Services, the healthcare sector and the criminal justice system.

Again, it is difficult to argue that the museums, libraries and archives sector can have a direct impact on the main targets and indicators for this outcome – and no literature was found that looked at the role of museums, galleries, libraries or archives in the North West in these terms.

Where the sector does have a potential role is in helping to support the emotional, social and educational development of some of the vulnerable groups that the Stay Safe outcomes are designed to protect. A number of museum and library projects in the North West specifically targeted children and young people who are looked after, for example. However, this kind of activity is considered under other outcome areas within the ECM framework (see 7.2.2 above).

The sector also has a responsibility to ensure that children and young people are safe when visiting museums, libraries and archives, and that staff are suitably aware of child protection issues and regulations (although this was not covered in the literature reviewed).

7.3 Youth Matters

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that is relevant to Youth Matters.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
Museum Fever and Represent	re:source [MLA], NW Museums Service and West Midlands Regional Museums Council	report	
Where Are They Now? The Impact of the MGLI	CLMG, DfES	report	
Fulfilling Their Potential	The Reading Agency	report	2004
Opening the Doors: Museums & Young People	Opening the Doors	report	2004
What Did We Learn? The MGLI 2000-2002	CLMG	report	
Post-16 Continuous Professional Development	Whitworth Art Gallery	report	2004
Libraries			
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service, MLA	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton Daemons Wargaming Club	Halton Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Halton's Proposal	Halton Library Service	briefing note	
Animate	Cheshire County Council	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Time to Read – Examples of Reader Development Work fro North West Libraries 2001 - 2004	NW Libraries Reader Development Partnership	report	2004
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	
Books on the Edge	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Services	briefing	
Smartcards: the New Driving Force	The Guardian (23.2.05)	newspaper article	2005
Archives	<i>No relevant literature reviewed</i>		

Youth Matters is the framework for the provision of services for young people and is summarised by the mission statement 'Something to do, somewhere to go, someone to talk to'. Youth Matters closely follows the architecture of ECM in terms of the principles that underpin the framework, the five outcomes and the developing inspection regime. But in other respects it differs from ECM, in that it involves new policy commitments for local authorities, and brings with it two new funding streams: the Youth Opportunity Fund and the Youth Capital Fund. Youth Matters is designed to give young people purchasing power and a say in the design and delivery of the services they use. Youth Matters is not yet a legislative duty, and elements of the policy will not be defined until later in 2006.

For museums, libraries and archives, Youth Matters presents a number of potential opportunities, particularly around the provision of places to go and things to do, and opportunities for volunteering. Much of the literature discussed above in relation to Enjoy and Achieve (7.2.1) and Make a Positive Contribution (7.2.2) is equally relevant to Youth Matters, particularly the discussions around involvement in decision-making, volunteering, personal and social development and the enjoyment of recreation.

Youth Matters is primarily concerned with four main themes:

1. Things to do and places to go
2. Volunteering
3. Information, Advice and Guidance
4. Targeted Support

Things to Do and Places to Go

Under YM, local authorities will have a duty to ensure that young people have access to a wide range of positive activities, and there is an obvious role here for the sector in providing recreational activities in a safe environment. Most of the literature reviewed demonstrates at some level that children and young people enjoy attending and participating in museum, library and archive activities. Projects from Opening the Doors and Museum Fever, to the Halton Wargaming Club, have provided the sector with valuable knowledge about how to work with young people and design activities that appeal to them. Consultation with stakeholders in the North West indicated that local authorities and children's trusts are keen to work with the sector in meeting their obligations under YM (for example, Blackburn with Darwen's Children's Plan includes an aim to encourage 10,000 more children and young people to use culture, leisure and sport facilities). National standards will be set for appropriate activities by the Government by late 2006, and each year local authorities will produce an annual offer of opportunities and activities. It is thus

important that the sector is involved in discussions about what it can offer to children's trusts and local authorities.

Under YM, young people in a local area will have some influence on the nature of activities that are available to them, and how funding is spent. As discussed in 7.2.2 above ('Engaging in Decision Making'), there is evidence from both the library and museum sector in the North West of young people taking an active role in determining the nature of the services provided for them. Young People will also be issued with a Youth Opportunity Card, that enables them to spend credits on recreational activities, and to earn credits through volunteering and community work. In many areas, libraries may be involved in the introduction of Youth Opportunity Cards, as library services already have the infrastructure to issue smart membership cards. A notable example is the 'Beez' smartcard used in Blackburn, and '123 card' used in Bolton, which combine access to library and leisure facilities with access to buses.

Volunteering

Following the report of the Russell Commission, YM has an objective to encourage more young people to take part in volunteering. As discussed in 7.2.2 above, the literature shows that museums, libraries and archives do provide volunteering opportunities for young people, but that more could be done to record and monitor this activity in a systematic way. The DfES, QCA and LSC plan to explore the development of accreditation for volunteering activity under the new qualifications framework. The museums, libraries and archive sector will thus need to ensure that it has the capacity to meet the requirements of this framework – once it is introduced – if it is to participate fully in this aspect of YM.

Information, Advice and Guidance

YM will include a review of the provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG) services, and the development of a more integrated service, available through a variety of channels. A number of library projects in the North West are already working in partnership with IAG agencies, and there is potential for closer and more widespread participation in this area as YM evolves.

For example, the Moss Side Powerhouse library is part of a purpose-built youth centre that also houses the local Connexions and Youth Services offices. Together with these organisations, the library sits on the Powerhouse board, and contributes to the planning and management of co-ordinated service provision. (casestudies.mla.gov.uk). Kingsway Learning Centre in Halton is another example, housing Connexions and Surestart with the library (Halton's Proposal). Libraries in Oldham are involved in the Children's and Youth Alliance Partnership, with Connexions, Social Services and Voluntary Action agency (Time to Read, 2005).

Targeted Support

Targeted support relates to integrated service provision for young people, commissioned by Children's Trusts, and providing a single professional contact for young people where possible. This area of YM is still being piloted, and more detailed guidance is expected from DfES in late 2006. This area of YM policy is likely to be of less direct relevance to museums, libraries and archives than other areas described above.

7.4 DfES Policies

7.4.1 Early years and family learning

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that is relevant to DfES policies on Early Years and Family Learning.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
Literacy and Social Inclusion: The Policy Challenge [case study of Start Singing at Tullie House Museum, Carlisle]	National Literacy Trust & The Basic Skills Agency	discussion paper	2004
Stories of Salford	Salford Libraries and Information Service, Salford Museums and Heritage Service	evaluation	2003
Alive With Learning, Study Support in Museums and Galleries	Education Extra	report	
Busy Bee Backpacks, Project Report 2005	Bury Art Gallery Museum + Archives	project report	2005
Blackburn Museum MDF Project	Blackburn Museum	project report	
Inter..im, Project Evaluation, October-December 2004	Harris Museum and Art Gallery		
Libraries			
Book Power: Raising Standards with Structured Storytime	Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Service		
Creating Together, Rochdale	Literacy Trust	case study (online) at www.literacytrust.org.uk	
Got Kids? Get Reading	Cumbria Library Service, Family Learning (Cumbria Adult Education Service)	case study	
Homeless Families Play and Learning Project	Tameside Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Caring to Read	National Literacy Trust, The Basic Skills Agency	case study (online) at www.literacytrust.org.uk	
Time to Read – Examples of Reader Development Work from North West Libraries 2001 - 2004	NW Libraries Reader Development Partnership	report	2004

Halton Daemons Wargaming Club	Halton Library Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Stories of Salford: an evaluation	Salford Libraries and Information Service, Salford Museums and Heritage Service	evaluation	2003
Archives			
Busy Bee Backpacks, Project Report 2005	Bury Art Gallery Museum and Archives	project report	2005

As described above (3.4.1), public libraries play a significant role in the provision of literacy development services at early years and foundation stage, through their involvement in Bookstart and other activities such as Rhyme Time and Storytime. These activities are provided throughout the North West, although none of the literature reviewed on Bookstart (and none of the literature on the subject that is readily available in the public realm), included research or case studies specifically about projects in the region.

The literature does provide evidence of the effectiveness of similar (non-Bookstart) early years literacy schemes delivered by North West museums, libraries and archives. A good example is Book Power: Raising Standards with Structured Story Times (Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, 2005), a study of a scheme delivered by Blackburn with Darwen Library and Information Service. This compared two groups of 2-3-year-olds of differing abilities over a six-week progressive learning programme. Baseline assessments were taken, and the progress of participating children was measured using the PIVATS assessment scheme. The study showed that both groups of children improved in terms of knowledge, manual dexterity and behaviour, but that levels of improvement were influenced by factors including age and experience.

Other literacy projects include the Families Reading Together project run by St Helens Libraries (Time to Read, 2005), the Homeless Families Play and Learning Project in Tameside (casestudies.mla.gov.uk), and, in the museum sector, Start Singing at the Tullie House Museum, Carlisle (National Literacy Trust, 2004), and the Blackburn Museum MDF project.

In early years provision, some local authorities are developing Children's Centres for the delivery of Sure Start and related services on school sites (Knowsley has identified 13 sites, for example), and these may involve some opportunities for library services. While this was raised in stakeholder consultations, however, the subject was not covered by the literature reviewed for this study.

7.4.2 Extended Schools and Study Support

The table below lists literature reviewed for this report which contains evidence of museum, library and archive activity in the North West that is relevant to Extended Schools.

Title	Publisher/Commissioner	Type of Document	Date
Museums & Galleries			
Submerged Evaluation Report	Tameside Museums & Galleries	evaluation	2004
Alive With Learning, Study Support in Museums and Galleries	Education Extra	report	
CLEO Video Conferencing Pilot with the Lancashire Museum Service Evaluation Report	Lancaster University	evaluation	2005
Libraries			
Moss Side Powerhouse Library	Manchester Library and Information Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Promoting Fun Online Educational Activities to Primary School Children	Blackburn with Darwen Library & Information Service	case study (online) at casestudies.mla.gov.uk	2006
Archives			
Report/Evaluation of a Recent School Visit	Cumbria Record Office	briefing note	2006

Extended Schools will provide a range of services and activities from 8am to 6pm all year round, all based at a single location. The core offer will include 'wraparound' childcare, out of hours activities, referral to specialist support facilities, and access to school-based facilities. Current literature suggests that the core focus of extended schools (for the majority of school-age children) will be the provision of out-of-hours study support, delivered in schools.

However, the extended schools agenda is still developing, and it is not yet clear to what extent study support might also include activities taking place in locations other than schools, and to what extent these might be curriculum or recreation based¹⁶. The prospectus for Extended Schools (DfES, 2005) does refer to external cultural facilities such as museums and galleries, so there are likely to be opportunities for the sector to host visits by children and young people arranged under the aegis of extended schools. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's evolving plans for extended schools, for example, include an intention to provide

¹⁶ Research into schools-based study support by the Quality in Education Centre at the University of Strathclyde, published in 2001, found that study support improves attainment to a significant degree. While subject-focused study support had the most beneficial effect, attending sport, music, drama or art clubs also had a beneficial effect on academic attainment. (MacBeath J, Kirwan T, Myers K et al, The Impact of Study Support, DfES, 2001)

signposting to other services, including those offered by museums, libraries and archives (see 8.2.2).

In order to ensure that they have a role to play in extended schools, museums, libraries and archives should seek to demonstrate to local authorities (and extended schools co-ordinators at the local level) how they are already providing relevant services. For instance, there is evidence that libraries in the North West have a good track record in providing study support for children and young people. The Moss Side Powerhouse, for example, provides a Homework Club, complete with study support staff who provide one-to-one assistance, and have close links with local schools, youth clubs and Connexions services (casestudies.mla.gov.uk).

Museums and galleries have also been identified as having a role to play in the provision of study support and out-of-school learning, including in the government's original policy document on the subject, *Extending Opportunity: a National Framework for Study Support* (DfEE, 1998). In its subsequent report on study support in museums and galleries (*Alive with Learning*), Education Extra – a national charity dedicated to the promotion of after-school activities for all¹⁷ – identified a number of case studies in the North West, including projects at Tullie House museum in Carlisle, Tate Gallery, Liverpool, and the Portland Basin Museum in Tameside. These activities were planned and delivered outside the school day, were voluntary, focused on independent learning, and involved contributions by creative artists and other external partners.

The museums, libraries and archives sector in the NW has also provided study support under the banner of the Gifted and Talented programme, part of the Excellence in Cities initiative, which seeks to provide complementary out-of-school hours study support for the 5-10% most able pupils in disadvantaged areas. In 2003, 100 students from the Wirral took part in the Forms in a Landscape project in the Lake District, studying a range of subjects in conjunction with museums, libraries and archives such as Abbot Hall and Dove Cottage (North West Hub, 2004). Other study support programmes aimed at gifted and talented pupils, and included in the literature review, were the half-term and summer holiday projects at Tameside Museums and Galleries, and a project with Cumbria Record Office.

Even where extended schools and study support activity is restricted to the school setting, museums, libraries and archives still have a potential role to play in the development of curriculum materials, use of artefact loan boxes and, increasingly, in the development of online and electronic study support materials. An interesting example of the latter included in the literature review was the CLEO Video Conferencing Pilot with the Lancashire Museum Service (Lancaster University, 2005). This combined the use of loan boxes in the classroom with a live video conferencing link

¹⁷ In 2003, Education Extra was merged with another educational charity, CEDC, to form 'Continyou'. The new organisation still has a focus on the importance of after-school activities, but as part of a broader focus on education, lifelong learning and how these are linked with wider social areas such as health and regeneration (www.continyou.org.uk).

with the Helmshore museum, which allowed teachers and students to interact with museum experts in structured learning sessions. Feedback suggested that sessions contributed to knowledge acquisition and comprehension, and were shown (albeit with a single, small sample) to improve recall of facts compared to worksheet-based lessons. Initiatives such as these have the potential to contribute to both support of the core curriculum and to out-of-hours study support, and are likely to be particularly beneficial to schools that are not located close to museums, libraries or archives, and those which find it difficult to resource transport and trips out of school.

8 Regional and local policy context in the North West, and recommendations for museums, libraries and archives sector

The following section is the result of consultation with key stakeholders and regional partners in the North West. The list of consultees was agreed with the Study Steering Group (see Appendix 11), The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview pro-forma which was designed to ascertain the views of:

- key stakeholders and policy makers in the North West region responsible for implementing national policy for children and young people
- the views of strategic regional partners of MLA North West.

As well as identifying key priorities and goals regarding children and young people, interviewees were asked about the kind of evidence they would expect the sector to produce regarding their activities with children and young people. Regional partners were also asked for suggested examples of 'grey' or unpublished literature, to feed into the review of the evidence base.

Interviewees were identified from relevant regional agencies including the Director of Skills Policy Group at Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), the Group Director, Children and Learners and DCMS representative at Government Office North West (GONW), and the Regional Director of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Further interviews were conducted with a sample group of the newly established Directors of Children's Services in the North West, which included one of the region's Pathfinders, Blackburn with Darwen.

8.1 Overall findings and recommendations

- Regional consultation confirmed that MLA North West and Renaissance North West should demonstrate evidence of their impact on children and young people against the outcomes framework of ECM and the policy drivers of Youth Matters.
- Part of this role in demonstrating the evidence of impact should include ensuring that existing good practice is disseminated to regional bodies (e.g. GONW, NWDA) and Directors of Children's and Young People's Services.
- No clear view emerged through the consultation process regarding the format/type of evidence that external stakeholders are looking for, other than that the demonstration of impact should primarily be mapped against ECM/YM outcomes.
- There was general consensus that MLA North West could communicate its work and that of museums, libraries and archives more effectively to relevant regional agencies and that this should be an imperative for MLA North West.

- In particular, there is a feeling that it needs to better articulate the impacts of the sector in terms of wider regional agendas, e.g. regeneration and developing sustainable communities, in addition to the sector-specific concerns of its three domains.
- MLA North West should also build upon and evidence museum, library and archive cross agency and cross sector working more effectively – to reflect the importance of models of good practice developed by the sector in a multi-agency approach to Children and Young Peoples' Services.
- MLA North West should also consider further developing its advocacy role in relation to i) innovative practice by museums, libraries and archives within deprived communities specifically; and ii) developing models of good practice and resourcing the collation of evidence and evaluations of impact across the ECM and YM outcomes to enable museums, libraries and archives to evidence their contribution locally. This is a key area where MLA North West should use Renaissance North West as a key source of innovative practice, testing and evaluating impact and disseminating results through an advocacy programme. Renaissance NW can act as a test bed of practice due to the high level of investment in education, outreach, organisational development, new audiences and collections.
- Finally, while evidence of impact of activities with children and young people is perceived as important, **structural relationships and involvement in local and regional groupings, partnerships and networks, is considered essential.** The Directors of Children and Young People's Services that were consulted all expressed willingness to work with MLA North West and Renaissance North West to further embed museums, libraries and archives in local networks and the emerging Children's Trusts.

8.2 Regional level

8.2.1 Implementation of national policy for children and young people

The Government Office for the North West (GONW) has responsibility for co-ordinating regional activities aimed at children and young people. These activities cover children from birth to 19 years old. In response to national policy developments, a strategic region-wide approach is being adopted, co-ordinated by GONW, with other key regional agencies, stakeholders and the region's 22 top tier local authorities.

In GONW the policy area of children and young people is a key priority, with a significant transfer of responsibilities to Government Offices in 2005 in respect of children, young people and learners. GONW has responded to national policy by creating a new post of Group Director for Children and Learners. This Directorate is developing the capacity to respond to ECM and YM and other relevant policy regarding children and young people as it emerges, across all relevant Government departments.

In implementing these new responsibilities, GONW is developing a regional architecture of agencies to optimise the North West's offer for children and young people, and to inform and enable local authorities to meet the challenges and opportunities of ECM and YM. For instance, Government Office NW is developing a partnership response to ECM and YM with the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) in terms of the region's approach to skills and employability. This will enable a joined-up approach to resources and to service provision for children and young people, across all age ranges and across the differing priorities of regional agencies.

GONW has appointed four Children's Services Advisors, who will work with local authorities to agree and develop local Children and Young People's Plans. This will form the basis of a strategic resource to drive the improvement cycle within local authorities and to share, acknowledge and implement good practice.

The new post of 'Regional Advisor: Culture, Children and Young People', jointly established in 2006 by MLA North West, Renaissance North West and Arts Council England, is a crucial initiative. The Regional Advisor has commenced working with GONW and will be positioned as part of its virtual Children and Young People's team. The recruitment of a Director of Children's and Young Peoples Services to the Steering Group for this post will be another important channel through which to position museums, libraries and archives as important to the achievement of quality provision for children and young people in the region. The Steering Group will be chaired by GONW's Group Director, Children and Learners and includes representation from the Director of Skills Policy Group at NRDA and Culture Northwest, the Regional Cultural Consortium.

Role for MLA North West and Renaissance North West

- There is the potential for MLA North West and Renaissance North West to play a central role in this delivery architecture by informing GONW's Children Services Advisors of the work of museums, libraries and archives across the ECM and evolving YM agendas, and to work with them to inform Directors of Children's Services in the region's local authorities. GONW's offer of partnership with MLA North West and Renaissance North West is substantive and recognises that, at present, local authorities may not currently articulate fully the potential of museums, libraries and archives to deliver common objectives. In terms of YM, there is a need to examine the local and regional offer to young people in terms of 'places to go and things to do', and GONW recognises that the cultural sector should have a key role to play in this.

8.2.2 Economic development and skills

The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) is responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of England's Northwest and has five key themes: Business, People and Jobs, Skills and Education, Infrastructure and Quality of Life. There is an imperative to improve the quality of careers information and advice in the region,

especially in line with the Regional Economic Strategy's six priority growth sectors, which include digital and creative industries.

NWDA and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) NW are partners in the regional architecture being developed by GONW. They have joint responsibility for establishing the regional priorities of the vocational curriculum, growing the workforce of the future, and ensuring that young people have access to high quality and industry-relevant learning opportunities across age-ranges. This wide remit in terms of ages means, for instance, that it will enable NWDA to engage schools in broader economic initiatives, such as the Northern Way, through programmes such as those that focus on educating children and young people for enterprise.

In terms of rural regeneration in the region, it is recognised that people and communities must be at the core of sustainable regeneration, and that lifelong learning, the retention of young people, the attraction of talent, and securing residents who are successfully economically active are central to rural development. Cultural and creative provision are cited as pivotal to the development of a creative rural economy.

Role for MLA North West

- Consultation confirmed the perceived importance of museums, libraries and archives to the Learning and Skills agenda; this could be further developed by MLA North West working in partnership at a sub-regional level with the new Area Directors as part of the LSC's Agenda for Change Programme. But the articulation by MLA North West that it understands partners' needs will be central to capitalising on these opportunities.
- Specific opportunities cited include the possibilities for MLA North West to raise the profile of museums, libraries and archives within the Regional Skills Partnership, to become involved with the development of curriculum materials, and help to meet the aforementioned priority of improving the quality of careers information in the region.
- Other potential opportunities cited include becoming involved with schools specialisms (e.g. archives); the potential of museums, for instance, to play a significant role in extended schools; and the potential for museums, libraries and archives to be cited as delivery partners in local prospectuses, in terms of personalised learning. Taking collections to communities and enhancing young people's learning and employment prospects through accredited volunteering, are examples of initiatives already being developed by museums in the region.
- MLA North West is already a delivery partner of 'Desire Lines' (a major cultural assets study) in Cumbria and, for instance, Rural Regeneration Cumbria (RRC) is considering how to engage young people at a local level within the development of their local communities and local decision-making processes. RRC would welcome discussions with MLA North West regarding future partnership working, where relevant, across these agendas.

8.2.3 Working with cultural partners in the region

Role for MLA North West

- **Arts Council England, North West** (ACE NW) has developed a Children's and Young People's Strategy and its Prospectus for Partnership prioritises sustainable communities, creative industries and children and young people. MLA North West and Renaissance North West are establishing effective joint working with Arts Council England, North West and this co-ordinated approach by regional cultural organisations to children and young people is perceived as valuable by regional stakeholders. This approach should continue, and potential joint working could be explored further, including joint advocacy and a joint strategic approach to both GONW and work with the Directors of Children's Services.
- Further joint working should continue to inform the development of methodologies to capture the impact of cultural activity across local authority and regional agendas, and to advocate for the role of cultural activity in key initiatives such as City Regions and Building Schools for the Future (BSF). Libraries are engaged in the substantial BSF programme in Lancashire as part of the development of new provision on new school/community campuses for families and communities.
- MLA North West, Renaissance North West and ACE, NW could explore opportunities for joint research and data collection; investigate opportunities for enhanced working between the arts and libraries; articulate joint working in terms of children and young people in individual corporate plans; explore shared priorities in specific geographical areas; and inform the Regional Lottery Forum of emerging opportunities arising from the developing children's and young people's agenda in the region.
- MLA North West should consider proactive initiatives with other cultural partners to advocate the role of cultural activity to achieve joint objectives across local authority agendas, covering safer and stronger communities, health and economic growth.
- MLA North West should continue to play a central role in the emerging Cultural Agencies Development Network (CALAN), co-ordinated by Culture Northwest. CALAN aims to become a resource for developing the role of culture within Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and sharing good practice across local authorities.
- Informed by the pilot in the North West, CALAN will co-ordinate the implementation of future regional stakeholder commentaries, the process by which regional cultural non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) – ACE NW, MLA North West etc. – will have a new role in discussing and shaping local authorities cultural provision. Regional stakeholder commentaries should afford the cultural sector a unique and exciting opportunity to embed the role of culture in local planning and service provision.
- Other joint approaches across the cultural sector include the GONW Local Improvement Group, the Areas of Common Concern Group and

the regional response to the Creative Alliance for Skills. MLA North West has representation on all of these groups and may wish to consider both how to inform its representatives of evidence of impact across the Children and Young People's agendas and how to communicate the work of these groups back into MLA North West and across its membership. MLA North West is a key partner in **Culture Northwest** and could assist it in recruiting board members from the library and archive domains.

- **National Museums Liverpool** is a key delivery partner in European Capital of Culture. There is the opportunity for MLA North West to engage more fully with Liverpool as European Capital of Culture in enhanced joint working to 2008 across its domains and to promote further a core role for archives in the celebration of Liverpool's 800th birthday in 2007. MLA North West should explore these opportunities further with **Liverpool Culture Company**, including the potential of a joint post.

8.3 Local level

There are 22 top tier local authorities in the North West region, and the appointment process for Directors of Children's (and Young People's) Services is now virtually complete, with local Children and Young People's Plans written by April 2006. While delivery structures vary between local authorities, the policy drivers remain ECM and YM at local level.

Interviewees cited that museums, libraries and archives need to communicate their work better across local authority departments and local agendas which impact upon children and young people, for instance, via regional local authority conferences on social inclusion and regeneration. MLA North West should consider further its role in facilitating this regionally and locally, possibly in conjunction with other regional cultural organisations.

There is a newly established NW Directors of Children's Services Group which may prove a useful forum to advocate embedding museums, libraries and archives in Children and Young People's Plans in the region.

8.3.1 Children and Young People's Plans and Children's Trusts

The 2004 Children's Act allows for a significant degree of local flexibility in the institutional and governance arrangements related to Children's Trusts, and this is being exemplified in the different models for Children's Trusts that are emerging in the North West region. Knowsley has a Children and Young People's Board which reports to the Knowsley Partnership. In Halton, the Children's Alliance Board will become the Children's Trust and in Blackburn with Darwen, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership sits within a family of multi-agency partnerships that includes the Community Safety Partnership and the Economic Regeneration Partnership Board.

Knowsley has appointed both an Executive Director of Children's Services, a Lead Council Member and identified 13 school sites to become Children's Centres. The local authority has established a new community complex in one of its most deprived areas, which is a joint initiative between the Council and Primary Care Trust that includes a Library Information Point. In terms of future developments, there is the potential to develop existing libraries as centres for young people. Huyton Library in Knowsley is a case in point: geographically central in a deprived community – but it currently closes at 7pm. In Halton, there are plans for nine Children's Centres delivering a single strategy for children and young people from 0 to 19.

Blackburn with Darwen's Children's Plan includes the objective of encouraging children and young people 'to make 10,000 more visits to culture, leisure and sports provision', and consultation confirmed that Blackburn with Darwen perceive museums, libraries and archives as having a valuable contribution to make across the five ECM outcomes, as well as to the drivers of Youth Matters – 'things to do and places to go', information, advice and guidance, and targeted and specific support for individuals.

In Lancashire, the Children's and Young People's Partnership is working to five 'footprints' that are co-terminous with groups of district councils with a population of c.126,000. These will sit within a pan-Lancashire Trust, enabling these 'mini Trusts' to share governance arrangements, information and processes. The Partnership Trust will work to develop a 5 to 10 year plan, with clear opportunities for engagement by museums, libraries and archives to, for instance, enrich the learning experiences of looked after children.

Role for MLA North West

- The potential role of museums, libraries and archives in achieving local objectives for children and young people needs to be better articulated in Children's and Young People's Plans than at present. The good news is that consultation with GONW and individual local authorities has confirmed that these Plans are still very much 'evolving' documents and that the potential exists for the cultural sector (and therefore MLA North West) – working in partnership with GONW and DCMS – to inform these plans as they go through the 'refresh' process. This would both better articulate the potential of museums, libraries and archives to achieve local Children's Partnerships' objectives, and embed museums, libraries and archives as partners in local delivery networks and within Children and Young People's Plans.

8.3.2 Local Area Agreements

The latest round of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) has four funding blocks: safer and stronger communities, children and young people, health and older people, and economic growth – with culture included in the Government's outcomes framework. In phase one of the rollout of Local Area Agreements (LAAs) in the North West there were two pilots.

Nine LAAs are being agreed in the current round in 05-06 and eleven in 2006-07. By April 2007, there will be 22 in the region.

Role for MLA North West

- There is an imperative to work with other regional cultural organisations to articulate and embed the cultural offer in Local Area Agreements much more substantially. This is necessarily labour intensive. But joint and co-ordinated Regional Stakeholders' Commentaries – piloted in the cultural sector in the North West with DCMS – will provide an opportunity for MLA North West to articulate the case for its domains across LAAs.

Role for Renaissance North West

- Renaissance in the Regions is one of the designated funding streams within culture that can be pooled within a LAA. Clearly there is the potential for Renaissance North West to work with partners in relevant local authorities to embed Renaissance museums' work within the children and young people LAA block.

8.3.3 DfES policies

In terms of the Extended Schools Initiative and the personalised learning agenda there is the potential for the pooling of discretionary funding; the clustering of schools in terms of resource; and the imperative to provide an opportunity for children and young people to engage within a wider offer to adults and the local community. Although the national DfES plans require a universal Extended Schools offer to be in place by 2010, planning processes are already well underway throughout the region.

In Blackburn with Darwen, the 'extending' schools agenda includes extending schools with communities of interest, extending services into the local community, and establishing networks of schools in local neighbourhoods with a focus on signposting to other services, including museums, libraries and archives. Examples of good practice to be developed further and disseminated more effectively include Children's Services working with libraries and Primary Care Trusts in terms of the provision of information and services for young people, and libraries providing study support facilities for excluded families.

In Lancashire, 20 Extended Schools Co-ordinators have been appointed who will work with clusters of schools to develop extended provision which can respond to community need. There is clearly a role for museums, libraries and archives in this, both in the creative provision of information, guidance and advice to children and young people, and in libraries acting as a gateway to information in local communities, which fits with Lancashire's current customer/citizen access strategy. Other opportunities cited through the consultation process include the provision of quality library services in children's homes for looked after and disadvantaged children.

Role for MLA North West and Renaissance North West

- It has been suggested through the consultation that MLA North West could explore piloting its work, for instance, in the development of specialisms for schools; again crucial to this is the articulation and strategic communication of the museum, library and archive “offer” and an understanding of this potential by local authorities.
- Local authority consultation also cited that museums, libraries and archives could consider piloting joint working with, for instance, youth and health services, to create multipurpose cultural hubs.

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11 Appendix: Consultees

National Consultees

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Jon Boagey, National Youth Agency, Head of Information Services
John Murphy, Hayton Associates
Jonathan Douglas, MLA, Head of Learning and Access
Keith Nicol, DCMS, Museum Education
Paul Bristow, MLA, Local Government
Suzanne Payne, LGA, Senior Project Officer (Youth Matters)
Viv Reiss, Arts Council England, Visual Arts & Education

Regional Stakeholders:

Fran Hulbert, Director of Skills Policy Group, Northwest Regional Development Agency
Nigel Burke, Group Director, Children and Learners, GONW
Janet Matthewman, GONW (DCMS representative)
John Koreniewski, Regional Director, LSC NW
John Bell, Director of Leisure and Community Services, Knowsley MBC and Merseyside Cultural Forum
John Hawkins, Head of Policy Unit, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)
Kate Willard, CE Rural Regeneration Cumbria and Board Member Renew
Steve Barwick, Head of Policy, NW Regional Assembly
Claire McColgan, Head of Creative Communities, Liverpool Culture Company
Howard Cockcroft, Cultural and Leisure Operational Director and Paula Reilly-Cooper, Library Services Manager, Halton BC
Diana Terris, Director of Children and Young People, Halton BC
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Jane Dawson, Culture Northwest
Madeleine Rogerson, Cultural Entitlement Coordinator, MLA North West
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12 Appendix: New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives

The report *New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (BOP, 2005)¹⁸ examined the evidence for the impact of museums, libraries and archives on social policy, specifically as it relates to social inclusion, neighbourhood renewal, community cohesion, cultural diversity, health (including mental health) and regeneration. A consideration of the evidence base in this work revealed a number of weaknesses that have also been encountered in this study of the sector's involvement with children and young people (see 11.1). The main points are therefore reproduced below.

Weaknesses of the evidence base on the social impact of museums, libraries and archives

A number of criticisms can be made of much cultural research, particularly where it pertains to the weakness of the evidence base.

Lack of causality

The difficulty in establishing causality in any kind of social research is widely acknowledged (Wavell *et al*, 2002), particularly when one is looking for impacts such as increased social cohesion. As Ann Bridgwood (2002), Head of Research at the Arts Council points out 'in a neighbourhood which could easily have an Education Action Zone, a Health Action Zone, a New Deal for Communities programme, a Single Regeneration Budget scheme, a Sure Start programme for pre-school children as well as core public services, how is one to say which programmes are having which effects?'

Measuring what can be measured

Faced with these complexities, practitioners often fall back on the technique of measuring commitment and effort, rather than effectiveness. This leads to a focus on outputs rather than outcomes, as Coalter (2001) argues in his review of libraries. Thus the presence of a policy or stated commitment to embrace cultural diversity or social inclusion, is often presented as

¹⁸ *New Directions in Social Policy: Developing the Evidence Base for Museums, Libraries and Archives* (BOP, 2005) is available at www.mla.gov.uk

'evidence' of impact, as we have found in our consultations for this project. Or, as Wavell *et al* (2002) point out, documents tend to describe the potential for social impact, illustrated by some case studies or depth interviews purporting to illustrate this potential.

Anecdotal evidence/low standards of case study evidence

The use of 'anecdotal' evidence in policymaking remains contentious. The current government view (Davies, 2004) is that single studies, case studies and public opinion surveys do indeed have a role as evidence, if carried out to, 'the highest possible standard'. The issue then becomes one of standards, not just methods, of evidence-gathering. This is particularly true of 'case studies', a term which is frequently used simply to describe a depth interview with an individual. The subjects for interview are rarely chosen as systematically as even the most basic quality standards would require.

Lack of longitudinal research

As Coalter (2001) argues, research is often too short term, sometimes project-specific and funding driven, while the requisite follow-up work to determine longer-term outcomes is never carried out. These shortcomings do not lead to a diminution of claims however, and a small short-term impact on a sub-group of people is often presented as though it were an enduring impact on a much larger group.

Little work on opportunity costs

There is rarely an attempt to measure opportunity costs, that is the benefits of spending money on one particular intervention rather than others. The real question for policymakers is not, did this work, but did this work better than another approach?

The 'advocacy' problem

In many of these instances then, the primary problem is the gulf between the claims made for a particular activity and the evidence to substantiate those claims. This can be summed up as the advocacy problem, a widespread critique that research in this area is rarely impartial and is too often confused with advocacy (Selwood, 2002). The

perception of cultural funding as marginal and often vulnerable to political changes, has led many in the sector to feel that without constant advocacy, funding will inevitably fall. Thus there is often a tendency in findings to minimise evidence of conflict and present only the positive side of any intervention.

Distinctions between advocacy and research are not binary; and even if one accepts that complete 'objectivity' can be attained, in practice, it rarely is. However, as cultural research becomes more evidence-based, more 'balanced' conclusions, which discuss both the welfare gains and losses that arise from public interventions, should be expected.

In addition, a greater awareness of the difference between evaluation and research is needed. In other words, evaluation of individual projects, however well carried out, cannot alone add up to an evidence base used to support policymaking for all the reasons discussed above. Evaluation is above all useful for the organisations involved. Longer-term, more systematic research carried out by third parties is likely to be more useful for policymakers.

Finally, research into the social impacts of culture will only have come of age when it is routinely included with broader research frameworks – whether it is studies of quality of life, citizenship or economic development. It is becoming clearer that culture has a major role in these issues, but a full understanding of that role cannot be achieved by studying 'culture' in isolation. The need now is to acknowledge the weaknesses in the evidence base and to move on to develop more robust methods: longer-term, more systematic, research and a more realistic appraisal of the spill-over effects of cultural investments.

This will involve being more explicit about the role of research vis-à-vis other sources of information, as well as greater clarity about the relative strengths and weaknesses of different methodologies. We should not expect case study-type work to diminish in this area and we are likely to see a growth in qualitative work. This is all to the good. But where claims are being made for particular effects, we should not be afraid to demand some harder evidence of these effects.

It is likely that research in the cultural arena will continue to feature a plurality of research methods – improved statistical data,

surveys, case studies and so on. It is therefore important that policymakers at local, regional and national level are made aware of what methods are appropriate in which case, what constitutes 'evidence' as opposed to argumentation, and what the limits of evidence are. This is not to suggest that they need to become methodological experts; simply that a greater appreciation of the possibilities and limitations of research is necessary in evidenced-based (or influenced) policymaking.

We need to understand that, in the well-worn phrase 'lack of evidence, is not evidence of lack'. Many of the arguments that have been advanced for the social and economic benefits of investments in culture have been neither proved nor disproved. In most cases, the 'evidence' points to both welfare gains and welfare losses – it is the job of policymakers, not researchers, to decide how to act upon evidence and how competing interests can be balanced.