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An Evaluation of the Impact of the NW Museum Hub's Primary Consultant (Museums and Galleries) with Manchester Education Partnership

Final Report

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1. 0 Scope

This final report reviews the progress and educational outcomes arising from a partnership between the NW Museum Hub and Manchester Education Partnership which started in autumn 2004. The period for the evaluation is from June 2005 to July 2006. The initiative takes its name from the post which it has created: Primary Consultant (Museums and Galleries). The main role of the Primary Consultant has been to develop and operate a programme of collaborative projects between Hub members and Manchester schools. This has operated over two phases and involved over 40 schools. This programme is known as the Manchester Museums and Galleries Pilot (Magpie). In addition, the Primary Consultant has performed the broader role of consultant, communicator, advocate and mediator between the education and museum sectors. All of these roles are reviewed in this report. An account of the first phase of this initiative together with an interim outcome of impact was published in the Interim Report in September 2005. This Final Report draws upon the findings of the interim report as well as making use of additional, subsequent evidence to produce a fuller picture of what happened.

2.0 Context

This initiative is located in a partnership approach to the provision of cultural-educational services in Manchester. Hub museums in Manchester have collaborated to devise and put in place a post and a process whereby they can work together with the local LEA and with schools to jointly develop their educational provision. Each partner is itself a partnership of institutions and the story of the initiative is also an account of the development of these relationships and of shared ways of working as well as an account of actions and outcomes.

2.1 NW Hub Education Programme Delivery Plan

The initiative is one strand of North West Museums Hub's Education Programme Delivery Plan (2004-2006). Through this plan, those museums and galleries that form part of the NW Museums Hub are seeking to develop their services for school children aged between 5 and 16. The plan draws upon extensive research and is supported by DCMS funding. As a whole the plan will support specific performance targets, namely that the NW Museums Hub achieve 38,000 new contacts between children and regional hub museums; and 57,000 visits by new users predominantly from social classes C2DEs and ethnic minorities by the end of 2005/06.

The Primary Consultant (Museums and Galleries) initiative is clearly in line with the expressed strategy of the EPDP:

"*….all activities developed through EPDP will:*
- *Emphasise collaboration*
- *Explore new approaches*
- *Seek to influence the education sector from within*
- *Maximise evaluation and training*

- *Use the detailed research and consultation undertaken with the education sector to understand the current challenges and opportunities of the sector*
- *Build on the good practice that exists across the Hub museums as well as the regional and national museum education sector*
- *Promote 'Inspiring Learning for All'"* (Anderson, 2004*)*

It is a distinctive feature of this initiative in Manchester that it includes two non-Hub museums or 'First Partners': the People's History Museum and the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester.

2.2 Manchester Education Partnership (MEP)

The perspective of the MEP was that Magpie represented a strategic move to work in partnership with museums and galleries to enrich the curriculum and to develop styles of teaching and learning. Magpie fitted with the mission set out in *Excellence and Enjoyment* (DfES, 2003) and enabled schools to build on the experience and success of previous enrichment initiatives such as the Manchester Arts Education Initiative.

Institutional Priorities

Manchester EducationMa Partnership and the NW Museums Hub are both composed of institutions which have their own contexts and priorities. These have affected their entry into Magpie, their involvement and the impact that their involvement has had.

3.0 Focus

The focus of the evaluation is determined by the objectives that the participating partners have brought to it. However, these objectives have seen some development over the lifetime of the initiative. This has, in part, been a response to outcomes of the initiative but is also a response to a changing context and environment.   The initiative was made possible by a convergence of objectives belonging to museums and schools. The NW Hub has taken on the objective of working in collaboration with teachers to meet the learning needs of their pupils. This was understood to imply joined up work between the Hub and the LEA at management and strategic level and equivalent joint activity between teachers and museum and gallery educators. The MEP is seeking to implement the strategy set out in Excellence and Enjoyment (DfES, 2003) of enriching and freeing up the curriculum while at the same time continuing to raise achievement in terms of the outcomes set out in the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy and the formal regime of NC assessment. In pursuit of this goal, MEP is seeking to work with a variety of partners who are able to bring learning events, environments or resources to Manchester's pupils or who possess expertise in teaching. MEP aims to use professional development, in particular through, various networking arrangements, to disseminate improved teaching and learning across Manchester schools.

This evaluation reflects the partnership character of the initiative. It follows that the desired outcomes are either drawn from across the two sectors or, from both.

Desired outcomes:

Museums Sector:

General:
- o Increased visits – increased use of museums and galleries
- o Increased visits from new schools – more comprehensive use of museums and galleries
- o More learning resulting from sessions/visits

Special (expressed by some but not all museums/galleries):
- o Formative evaluation of sessions/services
- o Equip teachers to carry out self-programmed visits
- o Raise awareness of museums as an educational partner across the education sector
- o Improve the museum sector's understanding of issues and opportunities in education
- o Extend curriculum range, e.g. contribute to literacy

Education Sector

General
- o Development of pedagogy, in particular the pedagogy of literacy and writing
- o professional development leading to improved teaching and learning
- o Enriching of learning experiences
- o Raised attainment in writing
- o Harnessing local institutions into learning
- o Enhancing creativity and enjoyment in teaching and learning
- o Developing networks to improve teaching

Special
- o Address issues of cultural deprivation or isolation

In order to do justice to this blend of objectives, the methodology of this evaluation has sought to take into account outcomes which are educational (eg attainment in writing) as well as outcomes (eg enjoyment, confidence) which are conventionally the explicit outcomes of museum educational activity. This has involved some challenges which are discussed further in the next section.

4. 0 Methodology

The research has been designed to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data from all relevant stakeholders and partners. An effort has been made to exploit natural opportunities for qualitative data collection and to

make use of data that has already been gathered in order not to overburden informants, all of whom are very busy individuals. Similarly, an effort has been made to simplify requirements governing the collection of quantitative data and to minimise the burden of this task – both to secure the cooperation of teachers and museum staff who have been asked to collect this evidence and in order to fit this task within existing practice. The underlying principle is that the different participants will want to collect evidence of different kinds for purposes that are closely related but distinct. The research methodology has sought to make full use of naturally occurring evidence and to complement it with additional evidence which has required specialised instruments and dedicated time to collect. Bringing together these sources has, it is hoped, optimised the extent, variety, quality, continuity, perspective and relevance of evidence that could be collected and processed, all within a tightly constrained budget.

4.1 Interviews

Interviews have formed a main strand of evidence collection. Face to face and telephone interviews have been used to explore the impact of projects upon teachers and upon pupils and to find out about the processes involved. In addition to teachers, interviews have been carried out with the Lead Practitioners and Co-ordinating Lead Practitioners; these teachers have enjoyed a broader and sometimes more extended experience of the initiative and have also gained an insight into the support and networking issues involved (9 Interviews). Interviews have also been conducted with 3 key stakeholders in the Manchester Education Partnership and with museum educators and Heads of Education in all of the 5 museums involved in the programme at both the start and the end of the programme (16 interviews). Three head-teachers have been interviewed as have three groups of pupils. A number of teachers have been interviewed several times over the lifetime of the project which has provided the opportunity to review progress and change.

The Primary Consultant has been interviewed on 4 occasions throughout the lifetime of the project in addition to various up-datings and electronic communications.

Other stakeholders interviewed include the lead provider of professional development and the evaluator of a related project (2 interviews).

Observation and informal discussion.

In addition to formal interviews the evaluator has attended five training and networking days as well as three Steering Group Meetings where he has had the opportunity to informally discuss impact, process and progress with many participants on a number of occasions. These sessions have also permitted the evaluator to gather evidence about the effectiveness and impact of the networking and professional development which has formed a key element of the programme (8 events).

The evaluator has observed three museum education sessions involving pupils, including those led by museum educators and those led by teachers as well as an inset session organised by a teacher to disseminate Magpie learning within her school and the launch of related educational project in Manchester. (5 sessions)

4.2 Quantitative data

Participating teachers were asked to assess writing produced by pupils over both phases of the project and this data provides evidence of progress in attainment. The way in which this assessment process has developed over the lifetime of the programme is discussed in the Note on Genre (p 57)

Participating museums have recorded the volume and type of sessions that they have delivered to participating schools and this data has been collected by the NW Hub.

4.3 Documentary Evidence

The evaluator has been able to examine the documents associated with organisation and delivery of support as well as the portfolios and toolkits that teachers have produced to record their work and that of their pupils.

The Primary Consultant has made available records of her activities within Magpie and more generally of her role in mediating between education and museum sectors in Manchester.

4.4 Literature

Where relevant, use has been made of secondary literature relating to other work of museums relevant to literacy and, to a limited degree, to research on the development of literacy.

4.5 Secondary Evaluation

Some of the partners in Magpie have collected evidence relating to particular aspects of the programme. These include:
- o feedback collected from teachers relating to particular training sessions by St Martins College (the training provider)
- o general evaluative comments collected by the Primary Consultant from participants
- o feedback collected by some of the museums relating to particular sessions

While some of this evaluation had a primarily formative purpose and cannot be regarded as wholly independent, nevertheless, very valuable evidence was gathered. It is part of the methodology of this evaluation to make use of internal evaluation; this approach increases the richness of data, and helps to make the overall evaluation complementary with internal evidence collection and evaluation.

5. 0 Description of the Initiative

At the heart of this initiative is the creation of a new post, The Primary Consultant: Museums and Galleries, within the Innovations Team of Manchester Education Partnership (MEP). The design of the Job Description and funding for the post have been shared between the NW Hub and the MEP with the latter contributing the additional costs of an appointment at a higher Soulbury level in order to take advantage of the opportunity to employ a particularly well suited candidate.

The purpose of the post is twofold:

"To manage and deliver a strategic project to encourage the creative use by schools of museums and galleries in Manchester (particularly those within the NW Hub), in order to achieve a 25% increase in 'contacts' with school children (aged 5-16) by March 2006

To support the leadership and management in schools to develop creative opportunities and experiences for developing a broad and rich curriculum that will raise standards of achievement and improve learning and teaching in Manchester schools" (MEP, Job Description, Primary Consultant, 2004)

This 'strategic project' is known as the Manchester Galleries Pilot in Education (Magpie) or more formally "Raising attainment in English at Key Stage 2 through first hand experience in museums and galleries". This in turn has two aims:

1. *"To enable collaborative ways of working to develop between classroom and museum/gallery professionals*
2. *To use children's first hand experience in museums and galleries to raise attainment in writing at Key Stage 2"*

5.1 Phase 1 Magpie

The first phase of the initiative ran from January 2005 through to December 2005. 9 schools were recruited to the project by invitation. The Primary Consultant was able to draw on her own knowledge of Manchester schools and advice from other consultants in the MEP. Schools were invited if it was thought that they would respond positively. In general this appears to have meant that the Headteachers of participating schools were well disposed towards the educational purpose and mission in the programme.

Lead and Linked Teachers

Three of the participating schools identified teachers who were invited to perform the role of Lead Practitioners within Magpie. These were teachers who already had substantial experience of either making use of museum and gallery education or of other, closely related, initiatives such as the Manchester Arts Initiative; one of the Lead Practitioners had an identified responsibility within her school as both Literacy and Enrichment Co-ordinator.

Each Lead Practitioner was linked to a named teacher in each of three neighbouring schools. The total number of teachers involved was 13 as two teachers were identified in one of the linked schools and a further two teachers in the school of one of the Lead Practitioners received support and took up museum based sessions although they did not participate in network meetings or professional development sessions.

Activities

Between May 2004 and June 2005 the delivery of the first phase of Magpie consisted of the following components:

- Meetings between Lead Practitioners, linked teachers, museum and gallery personnel and other contributors to:
  - introduce various participants
  - explain and agree objectives
  - discuss operation, planning and evaluation
  - review progress, provide support and share good practice
  (4 half days)

- Professional Development provided by St Martin's College EDU for teachers and for museum and gallery staff
  (1 ½ days)

- Teachers preparing audits, action plans and schemes of work with the support of Lead Practitioners
  (no defined time)

- Preparatory visits and meetings between teachers and museum/gallery personnel to plan sessions, inform the development of the schemes of work and to develop a shared understanding of the relevant environment and teaching strategies
  (no defined time)

- Classes from all 9 schools undertake a visit to a museum or gallery for a dedicated session
  (a half day session between the 4th and 15th April 2005)

- Classes from all 9 schools undertake a second visit to a second museum or gallery for a different session
  (a half day session between the 3rd May and 10th June 2005)

N.B. Some classes combined one or both of the half day sessions with an additional session to provide a full day of museum/gallery education. In addition, some teachers organised additional sessions outside of these two weeks.

The total number of participating pupils is estimated at 330 (11 classes of 30). The total number of participating teachers is estimated at 15. The total

number of participating museum and gallery staff is estimated at 6 across 5 museums and galleries – though further museum and gallery staff and freelancers have been involved in the delivery of sessions.

In July 05 teachers were helped to produce a summary of the process that they had each gone through, which St Martins College then edited to produce a toolkit which is intended to equip other teachers to learn from or replicate it. This toolkit was published in autumn 2005 and has recently appeared on MEP's website at http://www.mewan.net/museums.

In September and November 2005, phase 1 teachers were brought together for 2 sessions which focused on evaluation of the project and the exploration of ways that successful projects and pedagogies could be sustained and disseminated.

It was planned that phase 1 teachers would support colleagues in their own schools who have taken over the particular classes of pupils who participated in 2004/5 and have then moved up a year. This work was to continue alongside the development of a phase 2 which involved the participation of new schools.

5.2 Phase 2

Phase 2 provided opportunities to build up the achievements of phase 1. Phase 1 portfolios and toolkits were used to explain the process and the positive "word-on-the-street" helped to recruit new schools. A developmental feature was the retention of teachers who had developed confidence and know-how within the programme to provide peer models and peer support for incoming teachers. Five phase 1 teachers were asked to fulfil the role of Lead Practitioners – these Lead Practitioners were resourced for up to 7 days (at £150 per day) to support teachers from phase 2 schools or other teachers in their own schools. In addition, the Primary Consultant negotiated a collaboration (which represents a leveraged contribution to the programme) with the Wythenshawe Education Action Zone: 4 Quality Development Teachers from the zone, would each contribute 7 days to support teachers from phase 2 schools in the Wythenshawe district. On top of this, the Lead Practitioners from the first phase were retained as Co-ordinating Practitioners with a time budget of 15 days per head during which they were expected to support and coordinate Lead Practitioners and other teachers.

Museum and gallery educators were able to make further use of sessions that they had developed or modified during phase 1 and to deploy some of the learning that they may have acquired during joint training sessions.

However, Phase 2 also saw expanded ambitions for Magpie as 30 schools were invited to participate and more rigorous demands were made for the design and assessment of children's writing. In addition, phase 2 made the objective of whole school improvement more explicit than in phase 1: "Phase 2 will…allow you to identify a skilled member of staff who will be able to motivate others to use museums and galleries education and develop

enriched classroom practice into whole school improvement" (Letter of invitation to Headteachers, May 2005)

Between September 2005 and June 2006 the delivery of the second phase of Magpie consisted of the following components:

- Meetings between Lead Practitioners, linked teachers, museum and gallery personnel and other contributors to:
  - introduce various participants
  - explain and agree objectives
  - discuss operation, planning and evaluation
  - review progress, provide support and share good practice
  (4 half days)

- Professional Development provided by St Martin's College EDU for teachers and for museum and gallery staff
  (2 ½ days)

- Teachers preparing action plans and schemes of work with the support of Lead and Coordinating Practitioners
  (no defined time)

- Preparatory visits and meetings between teachers and museum/gallery personnel to plan sessions, inform the development of the schemes of work and to develop a shared understanding of the relevant environment and teaching strategies
  (no defined time)

- Classes from 29 schools to undertake a visit to a museum or gallery for a dedicated session
  (at least a half day session between the Jan and March 2006)

- A possible second visit to a second museum or gallery for a different session
  (a half day session between the 3 March and May 2006)

Each school was provided with a budget of £600 which they could use to fund visits or pay for cover.

In practice 29 schools participated in phase 2 and all of these, except 1, appear to have visited at least 2 museums or galleries. According to the data collected by the Primary Consultant 51 visits were conducted.

6.0 Impact on teachers

"The long-term success of the Strategies will depend on teachers developing the capacity to select and modify teaching approaches, making decisions on a moment-by-moment basis to best meet pupils' learning needs." (Fullan et al, 2003)

Interviews, feedback forms, discussions and collective evaluation sessions all confirm that the Magpie initiative has had a remarkable impact on the teachers who have participated. Teachers viewed the project as a way of improving and developing their teaching of literacy; the teachers had some, usually quite a limited, experience of using museums and galleries but were ready to extend this. Despite the novelty of using museums and galleries to address literacy objectives, the teachers came to Magpie with positive experiences of using museums and galleries in their teaching and were ready to see them as appropriate partners for educational change.

Teachers were generally selected for participation by their head teachers. For the most part they were teachers of year 3 or year 4 classes though some schools were also able to involve additional staff, including a school art teacher and a TA. It is difficult to know the motivation behind head teachers' decisions. Interviews suggest that some head teachers saw participation as a way of supporting strategies for curriculum development that their schools were already pursuing: enrichment, talking and listening, cultural and performance education. Some teachers appear to have been offered the project because they were thought to be already sympathetic to this way of working, while others were encouraged to take it as a development opportunity. One head teacher judged that a participant teacher's teaching had become more interactive and effective as a result of their involvement and was able to quantify this in terms of an improved assessment score resulting from an observation (from a 3 to a 1/2). Head teachers have a powerful impact as to which teachers will gain entry to a programme like Magpie and this will affect outcomes.

6.1   How Magpie has impacted on Teachers and Teaching

The degree of impact on teachers was variable. Some teachers were already converts to the teaching styles advocated by Magpie and some were frequent and longstanding users of museums. Other teachers were committed to long established approaches, but were persuaded to experiment with and assimilate new teaching and learning and to find ways of incorporating museum sessions. Some teachers, however, were professionally transformed – they believed that they had discovered a new way of teaching writing, an approach which had implications for teaching the rest of the curriculum. One teacher said that after this project: "I couldn't work in the way that I did before."

Confidence

Many teachers reported in interviews and conversations and in questionnaire responses that their own confidence in teaching literacy in new ways or in teaching through cross-curricular themes or more creatively (using more art or performance for example) had increased.

Enjoyment

Associated with this confidence, many teachers reported greater enjoyment of literacy teaching, and teachers contrasted the richness and freedom of teaching literacy through Magpie with arid and highly structured literacy lessons which addressed formal literacy outcomes. Teacher enjoyment and confidence were linked to the perception that pupils had been more engaged in writing through Magpie than they might otherwise have been and that children's writing was benefiting; in other words, thanks to Magpie teachers believed that they were being more successful as teachers of literacy.

Teachers reported that they gained new ideas or new techniques through the programme and that they had the chance to experiment.   The teachers were consistently enthusiastic about the opportunity to shape a programme of study around one or more museum experiences and the chance to experiment with novel, or little used teaching techniques or types of learning activity. The teachers valued the freedom and creativity that this brought to their own role and they were refreshed and confirmed by the positive responses of others (eg. pupils, other teachers, museum educators).

Improved or Changed Understanding

Many teachers reported an improved understanding of how they should plan, deliver and manage aspects of literacy teaching and, indeed, other parts of their practice.

One teacher said that the project

"has helped my own literacy teaching. I trained in 2000 so the whole of my training was around that literacy strategy when teaching became very formulaic: the whole text had to last 15 minutes, then you had to do a carousel… The lesson lost coherence. This project has brought much more speaking and listening and creativity…"

Other teachers, though experienced in using museums for history, for example, had never recognised the opportunity to use museums or galleries to support *literacy*.

Many teachers understood their project as showing them how to plan and teach in a cross-curricular manner and why it was desirable to work in this way. This understanding was strongest where teachers perceived in their own schools the expectation of a short or medium-term shift towards a cross-curricular approach.

Changes in the Teaching of Literacy

A particular objective of Magpie was to support the development of the way literacy is taught – in particular writing. It is therefore of interest to investigate whether and how participating teachers may have changed their practice in

this respect and why they have done this. It is difficult, in some cases, to know the extent to which teachers have changed their practice. A number of teachers expressed the view that they liked Magpie because it confirmed their own practice. Other teachers described their own professional development as something of a struggle: "I did feel that I battled for a while – though I had done the MAEI [the Manchester Arts Education Initiative] – I needed to break out of my previous way of doing distinct elements of literacy."

In some schools teachers were receiving other encouragement to experiment with their literacy teaching so it is difficult to distinguish the impact of Magpie from the effects of other interventions.

Nevertheless, all of the teachers agreed that Magpie provided support for, and opportunities to develop, the teaching of writing.

Real Context

Several teachers found that the learning and writing which came about through Magpie benefited from a real context which helped to motivate pupils and enabled them to bring existing understanding to their task making it easier for them. One teacher said:

"The literacy objectives can be barrier without a real context …especially when they are still learning English..."

The physical environment of the museum or gallery, the other people involved, the objects and experiences and the scheme of work that the teacher had designed provided a unifying framework for learning which, the teachers believe, helped their pupils.

One teacher described how he continues to draw from the strength of this contextualised learning to support other learning:

"All I have to do[is] *mention Light and Shadows* [the name of the project] *- it's something they can talk about - it's always there. I can use it as an initial start to lesson. There's a range of things that they can talk about. They can use their strengths…"*

Writing for a Purpose

Teachers commented that Magpie gave them the opportunity to set or negotiate a purpose for pupil writing and that this engaged pupils (made them interested) and also motivated learning (made them want to learn so that the writing would be effective):

"I think that it is about giving the children an enjoyable experience - something they can see a point and a purpose to"

Magpie supported the creation of purpose in a variety of ways:

- The museum experience was special and heightened and this merited its communication to others (other pupils, parents etc)
- Narratives or dramas recreated or derived from museums offered audiences and situations which led to written communication – both fiction and non-fiction (see Corder Ray, 2000)

Speaking and Listening

All of the teachers valued the way that the Magpie projects permitted them to plan and to make use of pupil talk to support the development of writing.

One expressed this point of view as follows:

"I would say that what has been the most significant impact in the short term has been an improvement in their speaking and listening, but listening is a skill that we focus on quite a lot in school anyway… but I would say that developing quality conversation has sometimes been somewhat behind.. and I would say that is where the impact has been...to give the children confidence to actually formulate a conversation, to actually speak in clear sentences and then the knock-on effect must be that, if children can talk about what they think, they are much more confident then to form sentences and paragraphs and possibly - if they are confident about the content about which they are writing - then some of the skills lessons that we do at the sentence level and the grammar - that might be brought in because the content is sorted..."

Teachers deployed particular strategies for developing talk which they had been encouraged to use through the training provided by St Martins College, such as paired talk, 'envoying', 'jigsawing' and 'hot-seating'. They appreciated the fact that Magpie projects suited this approach, they judged the strategies effective and they planned to use them further. A number of teachers were ready to reflect critically on why some experiments had worked less well than they hoped and to describe how they could modify them to work better in the future. Teachers described how they were already employing techniques that they had learnt or piloted in Magpie in other parts of their teaching.

One teacher described a lesson, which drew on the good practice of Magpie, which she had delivered subsequently:

"I put an image on screen - first let them have their own thinking time - 30 secs.– this helps to give space to the less dominant before they talk with a partner. Partnerships may be deliberately engineered but increasingly each pupil will talk to anyone – though pairs can be organised to support certain learners. Then they report back to teacher in plenary. Then I will ask them to talk in a given way e.g. story language. They have been able to take this on...to start using, for example, the word, "meanwhile". I might then do some written sentences gradually and build up to text . The outcome is that they can produce more connected and coherent text instead of a string of elements."

This teacher is routinely integrating the use of images, speaking and listening work and writing. She regards it as effective and sees her practice as supported by her school's policy on Speaking and Listening and exemplified by the Magpie programme.

As another teacher put it:

"museums and galleries are an excellent way to promote talk for writing but, I think actually we can do it in the classroom as well"

It is clear from the planning records and the responses of teachers that Magpie has encouraged them to use speaking and listening activities to teach literacy. Typically speaking and listening is used to develop responses to information other than text, for example, images, artefacts. These interactions between pairs or groups of pupils feed into writing tasks. Pupils gain interest and ownership in the information, transforming it through talk with others, and developing at the same time the "content" for their writing. Providing the pupil has been equipped with both purpose and content she is ready and able to write; this provides the teaching opportunity to develop appropriate writing skills and knowledge.

Magpie has shown how museums can contribute to the integration of speaking and listening with the structured development of writing. Given the growing recognition of the role of speaking and listening in all learning, this is a connection which bears further exploration. There are likely to be possibilities for the development of speaking and listening in museums and as a means of extending the range of museum learning.

Images and Objects

A number of teachers emphasized the importance of the visual character of the Magpie experience and how this represented an alternative to using text (reading) as a basis from which to develop writing:

"I could have put text on board but then a third might have switched off through lack of English, [by using an image] *then the talk follows involves all the children… they can all access it"*

Teachers emphasized that this was particularly important for pupils who were in the early stages of learning English or who had special needs. Teachers also believed that the use of an image or object might overcome some of the gaps in shared experiences or cultural understandings that might form a barrier to shared reading. They also expressed the view that seeing was a particularly appropriate way of harnessing speaking and listening to generate writing:

"Talk is the connection between what they see and write - otherwise they find it difficult to organise"

A particular feature of this project was the fact that teachers had the opportunity to plan appropriate activities in preparation or as a follow up to sessions in a museum or gallery. One teacher used images of nautical objects to develop talk and simple writing prior to a related visit. In this way she built into her preparation the visual approach that she knew would be used at the museum. Images of objects from a collection or related images were regularly used to anticipate, recall and sustain learning relating to museums. A number of schools took photographs or video of artefacts and activities in museums which proved valuable in this respect.

A few teachers were encouraged by their experience of object handling sessions to make use of artefacts in the classroom – using them to stimulate structured talk (e.g. envoying). Others introduced a kinaesthetic dimension by integrating design and technology activity such as puppet making which could then link to performance or structured talk and further writing.

Performance

Performance was another non-textual medium valued by teachers as an effective way of developing writing. Performances in museums and galleries proved effective at engaging learners and stimulating positive responses. Teachers were encouraged by the training they received from St Martins to experiment with performance techniques in the classroom. One teacher described how pupils started in the classroom by writing a reply to a letter which they later encountered as part of the performance with a "costumed historical character" in the People's History Museum. This supported pupil performance which in turn fed into writing. In this case the success of the project appears to be due to the construction of a credible historical and personal context which directly led to pupil performance and pupil writing:

"it wasn't simply the children sitting watching the performance...at certain points in the performance...the character will say 'I'm not sure what to do about this' so children go up to the main character, out of the audience, this is lovely what they do, they put their hands on the shoulder of the character and they say what they think she should do, so lots of the children have the opportunity to do…so they already think about what she might do, before they come to write the letter..."

It was clear to the teacher that the quality of the children's writing in the final letter that they wrote in persona at the end of the project showed development and improvement when contrasted with the initial writing in response to the letter that they carried out at the start.

Open situations

Several teachers commented on the way that pictures and objects lend themselves to stimulating talk which is open in the sense that there is no right or wrong response. This, they argue, encourages wary pupils to talk and to engage; it leaves space for pupils to advance their own ideas and opinions or to explore counter-factual or hypothetical possibilities. This corresponds to

the view, advanced in *Visual Paths to Literacy*, that interpretation and learning through the arts can be empowering. (Carnell & Meecham 2002, Grigg, 2003, Meecham 2005)

Schemes of Work

The teachers, in planning the programme of study, designed a co-ordinated sequence of preparatory exploration, powerful learning experiences, follow-up learning activities and assessed writing which appears to have worked upon teaching and learning in a number of ways. Some of the thinking and discussion of these schemes took place at network sessions which helped teachers to pick up and build in new ideas, new teaching activities and the good practice of others.

Preparation of this scheme of work provided an opportunity for teachers to work together, sometimes drawing on support from lead or coordinating practitioners, museum educators or colleagues from their own school. Teachers would typically start with a QCA scheme and then modify that to take advantage of museum sessions, new teaching and learning activities with which they wanted to experiment with or cross-curricular elements. A number of teachers commented that art schemes were relatively easy to adapt but teachers also chose to adapt history, geography and science schemes.

Looked at in terms of the provision of museum education, the gain in terms of planned teaching and learning is very great indeed. A museum education session might consist of a couple of hours of learning activities and experiences with a number of potential learning outcomes and some suggestions for follow up work. The addition of the Magpie scheme of work typically builds upon this, a plan for a half term of learning which has been organised around two such sessions.

By integrating museum based sessions with classroom practice, it is possible for the museum sessions to contribute to all of this learning. It can do this in a number of ways:

- By affecting the character of teaching and learning, e.g. authorising more visual or kinaesthetic approaches
- Providing 'extraordinary' experiences which serve as a focus for preparation and interpretation over a number of weeks
- Providing ideas, information, content, images which demand communication and understanding

Teachers were able to increase the impact and significance of a museum session by coordinating it with other museum sessions and other visits and activities. For example, teachers were able to sustain a focus on writing about place by making links between guided city tours and the interpretation of paintings of Manchester or with performance based history sessions. Another teacher made connections between a handling-session on African artefacts at Manchester Museum and a visitor to the school who brought first-

hand experience from a Kenyan school. Writing activities and learning were developed from both experiences; at the same time, talking and writing were helping pupils to bring together these two experiences to extend their knowledge of Africa.

<u>Using Museums and Galleries</u>

In general teachers involved in the project were made more aware of the educational provision of museums and galleries. One teacher commented that she had not been aware that museums were relevant to other parts of the curriculum apart from history. Teachers discovered that museums could contribute in a cross-curricular way, for example, sculpture could be used to address science learning while scientific experiments might address writing.

Teachers also became aware of opportunities for further inset. A number of schools took up opportunities for museum or school based inset, involving museum educators, which developed a range of skills and capabilities.

Network meetings and museum sessions provided further opportunities for lead and co-ordinating practitioners to develop working relationships with museum and gallery educators. In some cases, this has helped to support the development of particular projects, one-off collaborations, information sharing or career development.

A number of teachers were pleased to discover that they could negotiate with museums to influence provision: "I didn't know before that you could ask for a particular adaptation." Demands for flexibility in provision were sometimes contentious. Most museums believed that the emphasis on customised sessions during phase 1 of Magpie was not sustainable and phase 2 saw an overall switch to more off-the-peg sessions. Teachers, however, continued to value flexibility, praising museums that were able to meet expressed needs, where this would help them put together coherent schemes of work. On occasion, teachers and museum educators had differing judgements about just how flexible one and the same session was! There may be scope for museum educators, perhaps working with teachers, to find ways of developing common frameworks for sessions, where different activities or content can be slotted in as per demand, by switching the focus from one exhibit to another or by varying the learning activity in relation to the same exhibit.

7.0 Impact on Others

7.1 Staff

In a number of schools there was documented evidence of an impact on the practice and confidence of teacher assistants (TAs). Such an impact has not been a particular focus of Magpie or of the evaluation and further investigation of such effects could be productive. One teacher described how a TA had learnt how to carry out a particular, large scale art project from a museum session she had supported and was now using her learning during lessons

that she led. A TA who did attend network sessions had passed on Magpie techniques and ideas to other TAs in her school who were using them across the school. At another school, a TA was able to play a lead role in a local study which was much valued by both teachers and pupils. In general, the increased role of TAs appears to have created an opportunity for museum and gallery education which Magpie has helped to identify, but not, as yet, done a great deal to meet.

7.2 Families

A number of teachers reported that Magpie helped to engage families with learning. Parents and grandparents provided enthusiastic support for visits and helped pupils to extend their museum learning at home (e.g. acquiring a gas mask through e-bay for a particularly enthusiastic pupil) or by sending artefacts into school. One teacher reported that 4 of her pupils had subsequently taken their families to view a collection they had encountered through Magpie. There are opportunities both to target and to evaluate this kind of impact further.

8.0 Impact on Pupils

8.1 Qualitative Evidence

There was widespread agreement among teachers that the project had improved pupils' enthusiasm for and enjoyment of writing. Teachers commented on the volume of children's writing and their readiness to engage personally and to be ready to experiment and try out new learning in their writing.

"All of the chidren's confidence has grown considerably, they love writing and all write with high levels of concentration and enthusiasm."

Teachers also agreed that many pupils showed progress in their capacity to learn through talk and listening activities.

"Pupils are now better listeners and talkers."

The schemes of work that teachers planned show that teachers made extensive use of structured talk and listening activities in order to prepare for and build upon museum experiences but also other experiences (See above Speaking and Listening). Many pupils have extended their capability to participate in an extended repertoire of speaking and listening activities such as envoying, paired talk, group talk, role play, hot-seating etc.

"They can flow more easily in their 'encourager, recorder, envoy and spokesperson roles.'"

However, none of the teachers carried out any summative assessment of Speaking and Listening so we have only qualitative evidence of this progress.

A number of teachers commented on the way that the project included all pupils, mentioning EAL and SEN pupils. Teachers found that museum experiences were more accessible for more pupils and also that particular techniques, that they had been encouraged to incorporate into their schemes, improved inclusion, for example, storyboards, role play, vocabulary boards.

Teachers were generally of the view that the quality of children's writing had improved, though different teachers emphasised different features.

Composition and effect was seen to be an element where the project contributed particularly:

"Lots more detail given. Adjectives used in greater variety – children picked up extra vocabulary on the visits. Feelings and descriptions of senses used now as children know what it feels like."

Teachers also emphasised the way that writing benefited from more ideas and content which children acquired from visits but also from the pre-writing activities they were using:

"In pre-writing activities pupils show confidence and enthusiasm. When they talk about ideas they use improved vocabulary…They write their ideas more freely and independently."

Teachers also described improvements in the structure and organisation of children's writing. Teachers commented on particular learning such as the use of paragraphs, headings, connectives, openings, endings and also on the way that children's improved understanding of their own thoughts helped them to structure and organise their writing better.

"children now sequence their ideas through the opportunity to talk about their experiences and generate questions linked to the topic"

A number of teachers found the project particularly successful in teaching elements of structure which were associated with particular genres:

"through learning about a specific topic and relating letters/diaries to this the children now know the purpose for them and understand why they were written."

In general, the area of sentence structure and punctuation was less likely to be mentioned as an area of impact. This may be because this was less focused on in teaching or because this kind of learning requires different techniques. Linguists have, in the past, pointed out that the characteristics of written and spoken language are very different in this domain (Kress 1994). However, a number of teachers commented that drama and performance work appears to have helped to develop the use and understanding of speech marks. Some teachers found that because children were more assured about content and structure they were able to give time to punctuation and grammatical issues such as clause structure. Other teachers found little

progress here, indeed, the focus on purpose and the communication of experience may have led to putting some elements of writing on the back burner:

"I feel that because I have devoted more time to generating enthusiasm and ideas, less of the 'technical' aspects of writing have been taught, hence the lack of improvement in sentence structure. Obviously getting the balance between the two is important."

There was general agreement that a positive impact of this project was that deficiencies in particular writing skills have not, as they often appear to, stopped children from improving their writing:

"Even children who find it hard to write because they can't spell well have been enthusiastic to write because of the amount of knowledge and techniques gained."

These differentiated effects on writing are important and suggest that further exploration of just how changed teaching and learning experiences impact upon the various skills that make up literacy would be valuable. In particular, there are opportunities to consider how sequences of teaching and learning can layer in the multiple skills that enable different learners to improve their whole writing capability. Furthermore, it may well be useful to explore more carefully the role of reading in projects of this kind. Although visual, oral and kinaesthetic experiences have sometimes been used as alternatives to reading, as a means of developing writing, it is likely that a fuller understanding of progress in literacy would take into account the part reading has to play in this kind of teaching (Wray, 2004).

Access to cultural opportunities for young people living in Manchester was identified as a distinctive objective by a number of teachers and other stakeholders. We know from the volume of Magpie sessions that Magpie did increase access overall and from the perspective of schools that Magpie provided additional cultural participation for their pupils (with some knock on effects on pupils' families). Some of the pupils involved had very little experience of museums prior to Magpie. One teacher reported that only 8 of the 35 Year 3 pupils in her class had been into central Manchester prior to the visit that she made with them as part of Magpie.

8.2 Assessment Evidence

The writing produced by pupils was assessed by their teachers using a standardised scheme in order to permit general judgements about progress in their writing. During phase 1 there was some irregularity about the timing of assessments which made it difficult to interpret the attainment data. However, during phase 2 teachers, by and large, kept to a schedule according to which one piece of writing was assessed in December/January 2006 immediately prior to project, a second piece of writing was assessed in March after one term and a third in May/June. Teachers were requested to set three writing tasks within a single genre, such as story writing or report writing, though not

all teachers stuck strictly to this rule. In addition teachers were asked to make available the writing level achieved in the voluntary SAT test that most of the pupils took in the summer of 2006 and a small number of schools also supplied the levels for the previous year's voluntary SAT for writing.

The standardised criteria for the assessment of writing were those published by Jackson McCormack Education Services Ltd (www.jmes.co.uk). They were selected because they were sufficiently general to permit the assessment of writing across all genres. Two joint assessment sessions were included within the sequence of network meetings which helped to develop a consistent use of the assessment criteria. However, some teachers had more familiarity and confidence with these criteria than others so complete consistency is unlikely.

The Data

The sample was made by teachers at the start of the intervention. Participating teachers were asked to follow their normal monitoring practice by identifying 9 pupils: 3 performing at a high, 3 at a medium and 3 at a low level of attainment with regard to writing. This sampling method ensures that it is possible to analyse the impact of the intervention on pupils situated at different levels of attainment but it does imply that the sample may not be entirely representative of the whole population which may have had a less balanced mixture of pupils at different levels of attainment.

Schools reported the baseline or pre-project attainment writing level for 250 pupils, the mid-project levels for 238 pupils (95%) and end of project data was supplied for 201 (80%). It is possible that the fall off in schools that supplied attainment data over the year could affect the representativeness of the sample (if for example schools with disappointing attainment failed to pass on the data). However, this effect is likely to be very small.

Summary of Data

Attainment on Writing Levels Supplied:	Included	
	N	Percent
Preproject (December/January)	250	100.0%
Midproject (February/March)	238	95.2%
Endproject (May/June)	201	80.4%
sat2006	176	70.4%
sat2005	18	7.2%

Measures of Progress

Attainment in writing was reported in terms of National Curriculum sub-levels and these were converted into the standard point score equivalent derived from the DfES Autumn Code Package. This process permits the value added, in terms of points, to be calculated at midpoint (after one term) and at project end (after two terms) and this progress can be compared with the targets for

progress in writing set nationally and by Manchester Education Partnership. Where pupils were assessed by their teacher as being mid way between two sub-levels, a mean point score was allocated.

To aid comparison the following analysis focuses on the 201 pupils for whom we have baseline and end-point attainment data.

Mean progress in Writing (Points) by Year of Pupil, January 2006 - March 2006 (Term 1)

Year	Mean	N
3	1.67	101
3/4	2.45	20
4	1.61	75
Total	1.73	196

Mean progress in Writing (Points) by Year of Pupil, March 2006 – June 2006 (Term 2)

Year	Mean	N
3	1.11	101
3/4	.90	20
4	.99	75
Total	1.04	196

Mean progress in Writing (Points) by Year of Pupil, January 2006 – June 2006 (Both terms)

Year	Mean	N
3	2.75	103
3/4	3.35	20
4	2.53	78
Total	2.72	201

The three tables show that on average pupils gained 1.73 points over the first term, 1.04 points over the second term and 2.72 points over two terms. These figures do not total as all schools did not submit levels for all pupils at each of the 3 measurement points.

The evidence suggests that attainment in writing progressed over the first term at a much higher rate (173%) than the local and national target which is 1 point per term (that is 6 points or 3 sub-levels over two years). Progress over the second term slowed but continued to match local and national targets.

Against this slow-down, overall average progress across the two terms was 2.72 points which shows a continued above target performance against the target for literacy which is 3 points across a full year.

For the purposes of Magpie, teachers assessed progress in writing in particular genres. These point scores record progress assessed in this context. However, most of these pupils also took voluntary SATs in writing, where the genre of writing was externally determined and had no planned relationship to the Magpie work. Baseline and final performance data is available for 176 pupils. Performance in the SAT provides some kind of indication of how the focused writing performance within Magpie relates to the more general writing capability addressed by SATs. As the Jackson McCormack criteria which teachers used to assess Magpie writing are based on the criteria used to assess SATs it is reasonable to compare the two assessments, though there is a need for caution in interpretation.

Mean progress in Points for Magpie by Year of Pupil, January 2006 – June 2006 (Comparison between baseline and Voluntary SATs performance)

Year	Mean	N
3	3.17	96
3/4	5.33	9
4	3.48	71
Total	3.40	176

The mean progress of 3.4 points suggests that the average net impact of Magpie may be masked in the figure of 2.72 points over two terms shown the previous table. The SATs tests usually occurred some weeks after the final Magpie writing assessment – in a number of cases Magpie work was curtailed in order to make room for SATs – and in this sense reflects more fully two complete terms worth of learning. This would also suggest that progress in the second term did not slow but was similar to that in the first term.

Mean progress of 3.4 points over two terms is significantly beyond local and national targets and provides clear evidence of value added for the Magpie programme.

In most cases evidence was not available to the evaluator about attainment in the autumn term of 2005, which would permit a year by year rather than a termly comparison. However, writing levels for end of academic year 2005 were provided by two schools for a total of 18 pupils, which permits the calculation of value added for the whole year – just for this small group.

Mean progress (in points) for 2 Magpie schools by Year of Pupil, summer 2005 – June 2006. Comparison between performance in Voluntary SATs

Year	Mean	N
3	4.44	18
Total	4.44	18

The writing levels of these pupils progressed by an average of 4.4 points over a year – in comparison of a target of 3 points. While this is a relatively small group of pupils it does markedly exceed the progress these students made

over two terms. This suggests that Magpie progress recorded can be regarded as additional to the "normal" progress in writing that pupils will have made over the autumn term of 2005.

The data above do suggest a reduced rate of improvement between the mid and the third assessment point and some qualitative evidence may help to explain this. A number of teachers reported that much less time was expended on this phase of their Magpie work. Less time was spent in the classroom, talking about the topics and preparing for the written work which was then assessed. This will clearly have reduced the opportunity for learning. In the case of some schools, the character of the second visit was not fully understood and consequently was not so well prepared for and the ensuing class work was not fully planned and consequently was less effective. This was not the case for all schools, some of which planned extended schemes of work over both terms.

While the evidence suggests that Magpie has caused writing to progress faster than otherwise and that, in general, this above average progress has been sustained over two terms, nevertheless the reduction in progress between the March and June assessments suggests that there are difficulties in sustaining the gains made and that care, planning and support will be needed if these gains are to be sustained over longer periods of time.

Progress by Age

Progress in writing appears to have been slightly higher for Year 3 (2.75) points) than Year 4 (2.53 points). This pattern is repeated when progress over the first term and progress with regard to SATs are viewed – though the differential is smaller.

Mean progress in writing January – March 2006 by Age (3/4 group represents a small group of pupils for whom it was not known whether they were Year 3 or Year 4)
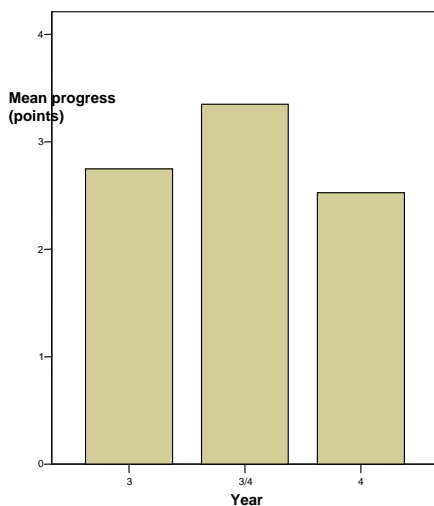
A possible explanation for this small difference is that the teaching and learning approach of Magpie – an emphasis on visual resources, speaking and listening, performance and other experiential learning – is particularly beneficial for the development of writing in younger pupils. This is an area which would benefit from further investigation, however, it can be said to lend support to an approach which might seek to adapt the character of museum educational practice to the differential writing learning needs of pupils.

Progress across the Range of Attainment

While there are some differences between the attainment of pupils grouped according to their levels of attainment at the start of the project these differences are relatively modest.

Progress as measured through writing assessments both at mid and end points indicated that pupils made slightly more progress if they started at a lower writing level.

However, where progress was measured in terms of valued added from the base line to the voluntary SAT, which can to some degree be taken as a proxy for overall gain, then progress was greater for those learners who started at higher writing levels (see below). This suggests that it is a characteristic of being at a higher writing level that a pupil is better able to cope with the kind of assessment tasks which they are presented in SATs – those which are less closely associated with experiences and with preparatory work within and beyond the classroom.

Mean progress in writing (baseline to final assessment) January – June 2006 by Attainment Group (assigned by teacher)

Attainment	Mean	N
high	2.45	69
medium	2.74	70
low	3.00	62
Total	2.72	201

Mean progress in writing January – June 2006 (baseline – voluntary SAT) by Attainment Group (assigned by teacher)

Attainment	Mean	N
high	3.80	60
medium	3.31	61
low	3.07	55
Total	3.40	176

The different measures of progress do not confirm an overall pattern. Analysis by Year as well as Attainment shows a more complex picture with lower attainment Year 4 pupils doing relatively well in comparison to their year group but lower attainment Year 3 pupils doing slightly less well against theirs. What can be concluded is that the writing of pupils at all initial writing levels, appears to have benefited pupils beyond target expectations. This is confirmed by the following table which shows that average progress in writing attainment was broadly spread across the most populated baseline levels. The numbers at each sub-level are too small to permit firm conclusions to be drawn at this level of analysis.

Mean progress in writing. January – June 2006 (baseline – end point) by pre-project writing level (point score)

preproject	Mean	N
7	3.00	6
8	5.00	1
9	2.29	7
10	1.00	1
11	2.79	14
13	2.88	42
14	1.00	1
15	3.24	37
16	3.50	2
17	3.03	33
18	.00	2
19	2.78	27
20	.00	1
21	2.00	18
23	2.50	4
25	-.40	5
Total	2.72	201

Progress in relation to Special Needs

Schools were asked to supply information about the learning needs of pupils – whether they possessed Special Educational Needs (SEN) or whether English was an additional language (EAL). Information regarding SEN was provided for 89 and about EAL for 80 pupils.

Different measures of Mean Progress in writing attainment in relation to SEN status

	Mean Progress Jan-March	Mean Progress Jan-June	Mean Progress Jan-Voluntary SAT
NOT SEN	1.54	2.42	4.00
SEN	1.72	1.89	1.62
Total	1.58	2.31	3.50

The evidence does not reveal a clear trend since pupils identified as SEN appear to have progressed more to the mid-point assessment but slightly less to the end point assessment. SEN pupils did markedly less well in the voluntary SATs. The total number of identified SEN pupils (18) is not sufficient to permit any firm conclusions to be drawn. Furthermore, the variety of different needs included within the SEN category makes it difficult to generalise about whether the Magpie approach was particularly well suited to the group as a whole.

23 pupils were reported as having EAL status. The writing of EAL pupils appears to have progressed more than the writing of non EAL pupils over both terms of the programme when measured in terms of the Magpie writing assessments. Qualitative evidence confirms that teachers believed that preparation for writing through visual, kinaesthetic learning and speaking and listening helped to make learning accessible to EAL pupils. The data show that this effect was offset when SATs are used as a measure of final performance – this is likely to be because the provision of a context for learning which is accessed visually and through talk, over time, appears to have particularly benefited EAL pupils and this context was lacking for their SATs.

Different measures of Mean Progress in writing attainment in relation to EAL status

	Mean Progress Jan-March	Mean Progress Jan-June	Mean Progress Jan-Voluntary SAT
NOT EAL	1.73	2.62	3.87
EAL	2.17	3.17	3.88
Total	1.86	2.78	3.87

Progress by Gender

Where progress in writing attainment is measured by the assessment of the writing outcomes of Magpie then the value added to boys' writing appears to be greater than that added to girls. The average points gain for boys was 1.88 between January and March as against 1.61 for girls. From January to June boys gained on average 3.09 points as against 2.48 for girls. Using the June SATs test as a measure of progress in writing reverses this effect: girls gained an average of 3.91 points as against boys' 3.59. It may be that the distinctive character of a stand alone SATs test is less favourable to boys than the Magpie assessment which, as explained above, builds upon extensive preparation.

This evidence shows that Magpie has contributed to raising the writing levels of boys, a particular target for Manchester schools; furthermore, it appears

likely that boys' writing levels *as measured by SATs* are likely to have been positively influenced. However, it also highlights that boys (or some boys) may face particular difficulties in applying improved writing skills to SATs in particular. This suggests that schools may want to give more attention to teacher assessment of writing, together with SATs, or that further teaching may be necessary to help some learners (particularly boys) tackle decontextualised, stand alone writing tasks like SATs.

Different measures of Mean Progress in writing attainment in relation to Gender

	Mean Progress Jan-March	Mean Progress Jan-June	Mean Progress Jan- June (Voluntary SAT)
boy	1.88	3.09	3.55
girl	1.61	2.48	3.89
Total	1.74	2.77	3.72

Progress by District

The schools were grouped into districts and it was intended, at the start of the programme, that different districts would have been supported by different teams of teacher practitioners and co-ordinators. In the event, this does not seem to have been the case and support operated across smaller groups of schools and, at times, across groups of districts rather than within a district. It is therefore not clear that the differences in progress by district reflect differences in the quality of support provided rather than differences in the responsiveness of particular teachers and pupils. However, the range of progress exhibited does underline that there is a need for proportionate support across all districts of Manchester if all schools are to benefit equally for schemes such as Magpie.

Mean progress in writing (baseline to final assessment) January – June 2006 by District

District	Mean	N
NE	1.91	53
central	3.04	24
south	3.59	27
Wythenshaw	3.09	64
east	2.36	33
Total	2.72	201

The relatively high performance of Wythenshawe is noteworthy as schools in this Education Action Zone benefited from the ongoing support of 4 Quality

Development Teachers who not only participated in network meetings and training but, through their close working relationship with named schools had both the time and the ongoing relationship to support developments in teaching and learning. This table provides evidence of a payback in terms of attainment for the additional investment that the Enterprise Zone made and also suggests that this kind of additional support could increase the impact of Magpie in the future.

Mean progress in writing (baseline to final assessment) January – June 2006 by District
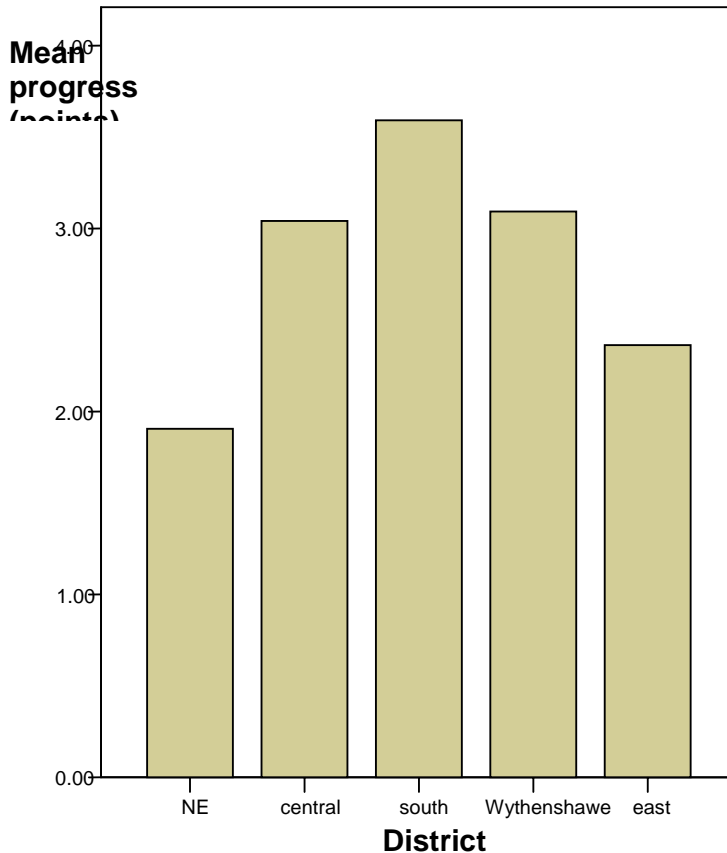
Further Data and Analysis

This quantitative analysis has been restricted by the availability of data and of time. Further work could be carried out to collect evidence on progress in terms of comparison of SATs performance for more of the Magpie pupils which would help us to understand the relationship between improved performance in Magpie writing and SATs. In addition, it would be valuable to make comparisons between progress in writing for Magpie pupils and for other comparable pupils. This would permit judgements of the impact of Magpie in relation to actual local performance as opposed to local and national targets.

There is also scope, to build upon this work in the future, in order to use attainment data to evaluate the impact of Magpie and other museum education projects. For example, work might be done to measure impact upon attainment in speaking and listening or upon reading or upon attainment in other curriculum areas. Clearly, the design of any such research depends upon the goals of the programmes in question and the interests of the various stakeholders.

9.0 Impact on schools

"I would like to see this as a whole school approach. I think each year group could do a similar project across the year, i.e. linking writing to visits and another subject."

In the first year, selected schools were invited to join Magpie but in the second year all Manchester primaries were invited. The scope for impact upon practice across a school will depend to a considerable degree upon conditions in that school and the intention of the school in entering into the programme. Where leaders in the school, particularly the head teacher, saw Magpie as an agent or resource for whole school development they were more likely to select individual teachers who had the energy, status or responsibility to influence school development and to put into place opportunities for dissemination. Where a school already regarded itself as having good practice in this field, or where it had other development priorities, there were fewer opportunities for impacting upon wider school practice.

The extent and speed at which the innovation of an individual teacher is transmitted to other teachers in her school was variable.

Some of the phase 1 teachers went on to share outcomes with their colleagues using their portfolios, year coordination meetings or assemblies and displays. Individual teachers reported that they had encouraged other individual teachers in their schools to make use of museums and galleries and in one case had carried out joint planning with the successor teacher for a geography field trip. A Magpie network meeting was used to share strategies for dissemination but discussion showed that there were a number of constraints to broader adoption in their schools (see obstacles below p 52).

One phase 1 lead practitioner who was the teacher and co-ordinator for performing arts across her school, built upon her successful leadership role in Magpie to establish a programme for her school through which every class went to one museum to experience multiple sessions some of which she had devised and led, some of which were led by the gallery or freelancers. In a few cases this led to follow up work with classes back in school following a scheme of work which this teacher had helped to design. This teacher is planning to develop the capacity of classroom teachers in the school to plan and lead museum education sessions in museums but also to follow through in the classroom. This example suggests that the existence of a champion within a school, who has the responsibility to develop teaching and learning in this direction, and who is not tied to a particular class, can lead to rapid and extensive dissemination within a particular school.   In a similar way, a phase 2 Magpie teacher who teaches art throughout her school had the opportunity to share Magpie approaches with a range of classes and teachers.

One school worked particularly closely with a museum, setting up a twilight session at the gallery at which teachers and museum educators planned a

bespoke museum-led session on the theme of myths and legends – with a particular focus on monsters – and a complementary teacher-led session for the afternoon. The teacher was helped by the involvement of one of the lead practitioners and was also encouraged to make use of images that the museum makes available on its website. This combination of professional development, curriculum development and successful teaching and learning explains the school's commitment to run a version of the project next year for the succeeding cohort and to develop a new version of the project, with a history focus, for Year 5. In the light of this project, the head teacher of this school has suggested that each class makes one visit per term

In a number of schools, a planned transfer of the Magpie teacher into a particular year was used as a mechanism for extending practice. One Year 3 teacher knew that she was to pick up a Year 2 class next year but she believed that part of the programme that she had created would be repeated by the incoming Year 3 teacher.

In more than one school, Magpie has provided opportunities and professional development for TAs. One TA has attended network sessions and been able to play a role in disseminating new teaching approaches to other TAs and into other classes – in particular through art activities that they have been running. This school also carried out some internal evaluation with pupils to discover how they valued these ways of learning. Pupils identified being nervous as a barrier to learning and said that Magpie had helped to give them the ideas and words which helped them write. This evaluation, combined with evidence that attainment for these pupils was good, is encouraging the year 6 teachers to adopt elements of Magpie.

While some teachers appear to have found a ready audience for Magpie in their own schools, others faced uncertainty or even contradictory messages. Teachers at one school were uncertain about their capability to disseminate good practice in their own school because they did not think they were recognised as having such a role and because they understood that the school's literacy co-ordinator had quite a different approach. Another teacher, who was working in a school under scrutiny for low achievement, believed that independent literacy consultants were working against the kinds of developments implied by Magpie, since they were advocating a return to the formal, text-focused approach associated with the NLS.

A school in a deprived part of Manchester, very much valued the single visit that they were able to make and the way that this had contributed to the curriculum. However, the head teacher expressed frustration that the school did not have the resources to pay the transport costs for other visits. As a result, the school believed that a rolling out of Magpie within the school was not viable. The head teacher of the school made a plea for outreach work or transport subsidies which might permit this school to benefit from museum and gallery education.
A number of schools were in the process of moving towards a more cross curricular approach and Magpie provided a good pilot for this change. One teacher, having experimented with some cross-curricular teaching in the

previous year, took on Magpie as part of a wider innovation – that of making all of Year 3 cross-curricular. However, another teacher explained that setting in her school made it very difficult to organise cross-curricular work, frustrating her efforts to make writing cross curricular.

Dissemination in schools was a particular focus of network meetings. Teachers were asked to share strategies and experiences and the expectation that teachers would communicate good practice was re-inforced.

Inset

A successful whole-school Inset was observed where the Magpie teacher described her Magpie teaching and its impact. All teachers and TAs had a chance to experience a range of teaching and learning activities which the Magpie teacher had learnt about or developed through the project. The session was delivered with great enthusiasm and was well received by teachers.

Another school ran a full day's Inset for all staff. Dissemination at this school was particularly strong and has involved team teaching, teaching observation and resource development. In this case, internal dissemination went hand in hand with external dissemination: the school successfully submitted its teacher development work for a Leading Aspect Award and has gone on to share some of its resources with the local Primary Strategy for Literacy Network. The fact that *two* teachers from this school participated in the Magpie training and network appears to have helped the process of dissemination in school: working together those two teachers were able to support one another in the task of relating the innovation they were experiencing in their own teaching and through the Magpie network to the needs of other pupils and teachers in their schools.

At one of the phase 1 schools, Magpie has been used as a model for developing teaching and learning in Year 1 and will be extended into nursery and reception classes. In this school, the continued involvement of one of the school's teachers as a Lead Practitioner has proved to be a successful means for dissemination innovation within the school.

By the time of the last network meeting of summer 06 the majority of the teachers had either already led or contributed to school Inset arising from Magpie or were committed to doing so.

A number of teachers expressed an interest in seeing how pupils who had participated in Magpie would progress if the same approach were sustained and built upon in succeeding years. It is not clear, however, that schools have mechanisms in place to sustain innovatory practice in this way and it is possible that some pupils might be frustrated if they find that ways of learning where they experienced success are no longer being offered to them.

Displays and Assemblies

A number of teachers mentioned the way that displays in a classroom could be used to sustain the impact of learning over time and that school displays could engage other teachers and children. One teacher described how a banner, which had been made by a year group together at a museum, was now "in pride of place in the school hall." A number of schools used the challenge of a presentation through assembly as a communication task for which pupils had to prepare written, spoken and visual material.

The Portfolio

Teachers were asked to build a portfolio which documented their own planning, learning activities and writing outcomes. Teachers judged this to be a useful tool for teachers to reflect on and record their practice and the learning outcomes of their pupils. Teachers also found the portfolio a useful tool of communication to show one another and other teachers in their schools what had been achieved and help other teachers to see develop their own practice. Portfolios were also used as evidence towards external awards, such as the Leading Aspect Award.

Toolkit

Participants from each school were asked to summarise the process that they had been through to conceive, plan and deliver their Magpie projects. These summaries were then combined with selections from the school portfolio to provide other schools with a set of exemplars of how to do Magpie type projects. The exemplars from phase 1 proved to be useful with phase 2 schools but it is not clear how helpful they have been in disseminating or sustaining Magpie within phase 1 schools. The toolkit represents a resource that can be used in advocacy work and professional development relating to museum and gallery education. The phase 1 toolkit is now available on the MEP's website: MEWAN.

Impact on a District - Wythenshawe Case Study

A relatively large number of schools were recruited from Wythenshawe. These schools received additional support from the Quality Development Teachers (QDTs) who are assigned to support particular schools. Several of these QDTs attended one of more of the general training and networking sessions and the QDTs attached to particular schools were able to support Magpie planning activity in the course of their regular visits and support work with particular schools. These QDTs also attended a number of museum visits and, on some cases, played an active role in supported groups of learners during self-guided sessions. They were also able to return to the schools during the period of follow up, some of them providing resources or ideas.

A previous project in Wythenshawe, which looked at the local environment as a context for learning, appears to have encouraged head teachers and teachers to look to outside partners for ways of addressing curriculum needs. Furthermore, the availability of additional resources which paid for additional

visits, encouraged teachers to perceive their geographical distance from the Hub museums as a form of deprivation which ought to be remedied rather than as significant barrier which operated against making use of them. A separate Literacy Network within Wythenshawe provided an opportunity to share experiences and strategies and to locate Magpie within a sustained campaign of improvement to this part of the curriculum.

Teachers in Wythenshawe schools commented on the way that visits, including those to museums and galleries, empowered accompanying parents and teacher assistants to contribute to literacy. In contrast, a school in a deprived part of Manchester outside of any education action zone, believed that the absence of parental support made it difficult for them to take advantage of museum sessions.

The Primary Consultant was able to draw upon the expertise of one QDT to lay on a professional development session for gallery educators for one Hub museum.

There is some evidence that impact has been particular strong in Wythenshawe schools when measured in terms of attainment (see p 32) However, this would not be surprising considering the additional investment in this programme in terms of teacher support and pupil visits.

The success of Magpie in Wythenshawe can be attributed to the same factors at play elsewhere, only the resourcing of activity, the readiness for change and the convergence of influence was perhaps greater.

10.0 Explaining the Impact

Teachers were asked in interviews and questionnaires to account for the changes in understanding and behaviour set out above. Most teachers spoke of the network meetings as being a valuable forum. Teachers valued the opportunity to exchange experiences and share practice with teachers from other schools and from their own schools as well as the inputs made by museum and gallery educators and by the professional development team from St Martin's College. The programme of meetings consisted of a carefully designed mixture of networking, skills development, sharing of good practice, planning, modelling of pupil experiences, assessment of writing, evaluation, record keeping and portfolio building. Through these activities a community of teacher practitioners was established who, though they brought different experiences, institutional commitments and expertise, enjoyed some shared objectives, opportunities and challenges and were therefore in a position to understand and recognise one another's achievements, offer support and relevant practice and, in this way, encourage and endorse the risk taking and extra work implied by this kind of innovation.

It is possible to pick out some of the particular contributions of different types of participant.

10.1 St Martin's College Educational Development Unit

St Martin's brought to Magpie an up-to-date knowledge of developments of literacy teaching, learning and assessment and a well developed model which explained how teachers could improve their literacy teaching. In summary, the approach is to carefully sequence a variety of speaking and listening activities between different writing activities in order, over time, to achieve the writing objectives prescribed by the National Literacy Strategy. This model was married to the opportunity for museum and gallery education by asking teachers to use museum and gallery activities, whether in museums or in the classroom, as enriching experiences within the sequences of teaching and learning that they should plan.

St Martin's was able draw on their extensive experience of teacher education to model for Magpie teachers a repertoire of tried and tested techniques which were quickly adopted and experimented with by the Manchester teachers.

The teachers were extremely positive about the training provided by the St Martin's College team. In their view it helped them to meet the expectation of their institution to find ways of developing literacy teaching and to unite this with the opportunity to design and make use of museum and gallery sessions.

"the first days of St Martin's training were really good. They focused on us as teachers in school, then went from that on to promotion of creativity to improve writing. They brought in museum and gallery staff to achieve a common goal…"

The teachers found the St Martin's model for sequencing useful and were also encouraged to make use of particular teaching techniques, such as pair talk and hot-seating. In general, the training encouraged the teachers to be more creative and experimental and helped them to make sense of and take advantage of the opportunities provided through Magpie.

10.2 Museum Sessions

The focus of this evaluation is not directly upon the quality of sessions but upon the way they impacted upon teacher practice and pupil writing.

For the purposes of this evaluation we can say that museum sessions have two kinds of outcome:

> 1. learning outcomes for pupils – writing and other curriculum learning
> 2. learning outcomes for teachers and other staff – development of teaching skills, particularly for using images and objects from collections

Pupil Outcomes

In discussion and interview teachers commented on the way that museum sessions engaged, stimulated and motivated learners. Pupils were judged to have had memorable enjoyable experiences. They particularly valued hands on, creative and interactive sessions and were stimulated by the objects and by the educators they encountered.

Some sessions were judged to have matched within a larger programme of learning extremely well; such sessions offered first hand experiences which illuminated and sustained the curriculum topic being addressed over several weeks. A few teachers were critical of particular sessions because they judged that they had not met the needs of their pupils as well as they might. For example, one teacher took the view that a session was not sufficiently interactive – she felt that an opportunity for pupils to contribute their ideas and viewpoints had been missed. Others criticised sessions because they had not contributed particularly well to the project aim of contextualising particular kinds of writing, for example, one session included some writing but the teacher felt that this writing made no connection to the writing that she was working on with this group.

In some cases, teachers did not seem to have much foreknowledge of the content or themes or activities that would be addressed in the course of a session. This meant that they were not able to carry out preparatory work. For example, a museum educator in one museum struggled to give pupils sufficient geographic knowledge to understand where several exhibits came from. Had the teacher known that this was going to be a focus then the pupils could have done the relevant geography in the classroom in which case they could have applied that knowledge in the museum.

Where there is an expectation that teachers will integrate learning in a museum with learning in the classroom then they are likely to have need for more detailed knowledge of the content of a session. This need is likely to be greater if the curriculum focus is literacy (because there are so many different literacy outcomes to a given session) than it is if the focus is something more determinate such as history or science.

Some teachers were encouraged by Magpie to programme in sessions at museums or other heritage providers outside of Manchester. The Magpie approach was used to plan for literacy and other learning outcomes from these sessions. This might be viewed as a way in which the NW Hub is, as intended, contributing to educational activity across the region's museums. However, it also raises a question for particular institutions about the overall quality and cost of their offer (including cost of transport) in relation to one another and the way in which such provision might be co-ordinated or even jointly marketed.

Teacher Outcomes

Teachers did believe that they had learnt from the teaching of museum educators. Some commented on the inspirational approach of individuals, some were encouraged by a successful museum session to experiment with learning activities, such as drama, dance or interpreting images, that they have previously avoided. Where teachers went on to conduct their own sessions in museums, they had the chance to develop the skills and confidence to use museums as a resource, and they were able to draw on museum educator practice during sessions. However, relatively few teachers went on to do this, and those who did had invested in additional professional development with museum educators. Teachers on the Magpie programme benefited from professional development, which related to museum education practice but focused on writing. In the light of this training, the impact of modelling by museum educators helped to confirm a teaching style but did not necessarily demonstrate how such a style could be used to achieve specific learning objectives.

If museums continue to regard sessions as an opportunity for professional development then it is necessary to review the intended outcomes and practice. It may be, for example, that teachers and teacher assistants need to fulfil a more definite role during some sessions or that, within a partnership like Magpie, the development of the capacity of teachers and teacher assistants to use museums and galleries more independently should become a more explicit focus. If a package of taught sessions and complementary self-programmed sessions combined on a single day, or over a period of time, becomes more normal, then there is a need to think about how the learning outcomes for pupils and for teachers, across these sessions, can be co-ordinated.

10.3 Role of Teacher Practitioners and Co-ordinating Practitioners

Central to Magpie is the concept of the lead practitioner – a teacher who is a broker, an advocate and an experienced user of museum and gallery education. Teacher learning has, to some degree, made every Magpie participant such an expert and by the end of phase 2 many of the teachers were playing this role in their own schools while many of the phase 1 teachers were playing this role at an interschool or network level.

Progress in the development of this role has, as described in section 9 above, been strong at school level. Progress at cross-school level has been more patchy. The majority of support has been limited to advice, or brokering at the network sessions which has made it easier or quicker for a teacher to get their own projects going. There some examples of good partnerships, where a lead practitioner or a co-ordinating practitioner has established a sustained relationship with a Magpie teacher, but this is rarer. In at least one case, a co-ordinating practitioner actually designed and delivered a museum session for participating teacher. In Wythenshawe, QDTs, who fulfilled the role of lead practitioners have been able to provide more sustained support, typically having repeated contact with the Magpie teacher and joining one or more museum sessions.

There is evidence, however, that teachers would have benefited from more sustained support. In one case, a teacher discovered that a particular session, although enjoyable, did not have the curriculum content that she had expected. She had explained her particular needs on the application form but had not discussed them with the museum in question. From her point of view the visit was "wasted" and additional work and time was required to engineer an alternative event to simulate a targeted piece of writing. In discussion, the teacher criticised her own response, *"I didn't speak to anyone in the network, I felt that I needed to get on with it."* However, this teacher would have benefited from support which might have helped her to understand in advance what the session consisted of and how she might have been able to adapt it for her needs or, alternatively, book a different session. The culture of independence remains strong for teachers who may, in addition, face practical difficulties in accessing support from busy teachers outside of their own schools. Those schools that were able to send two teachers to the Magpie network may be less in need of such support.

As part of phase 3, the Primary Consultant is looking to explore how the relationship between lead- and coordinating practitioners and less experienced teachers should develop. It would be valuable to explore different models for the provision of such lead practitioners across Manchester. The current Magpie model implies that each cohort of Magpie teachers will graduate into lead practitioners – some of whom will lead within their own schools and some will lead through the succeeding cohort of Magpie teachers. For the next phase, MEP has agreed to support a further 6 lead practitioners, who will be recruited from phase 2 participants, each will provide 1 day per term's support to schools which do not have a Magpie teacher. One model might be to try to establish a lasting lead practitioner role in each primary school (which might well be combined with other functions). The current plan to sustain the involvement of the current phase 2 participants for another year points to such as strategy. Such a role might be supported and recognised by the MEP (through the Primary Consultant) and the Hub through the provision of professional development, communications, networks and access to learning opportunities.

10.4 The organisation of museum learning

The impact on writing related to the way and the extent to which teachers and pupils were able to organise their learning around sessions of museum learning. As an extreme example, one teacher contrasted the impact of two sessions which formed part of a single programme. The first session was well prepared and pupils followed-up with two week's of writing, speaking and listening activities before they produced an extended piece of writing which showed marked progress. The second visit was hurried - because the pupils had to take SATs the following week. As a result the written response to the museum visit took place on the afternoon of the visit without any further preparation. The teacher judged that there had been little impact on attainment in writing.

11.0 Impact on Museums and Galleries

11.1 Volume

Detailed figures of the volume and type of visits were collected by the participating museums and are summarised in appendix 1. They indicate that all of the museums managed to recruit new schools as a result of Magpie. Manchester Art Gallery, already a very popular destination, recruited 20 new schools while Manchester Museum recruited 16 (though some of these schools were new to both museums). In total there were 579 museum education sessions due to Magpie between 2004-6 of which 34 were newly devised for Magpie and 76 were self-programmed by Magpie teachers. These visits involved a total of 16,933 pupils and 2, 481 adults from 42 schools – though some of these pupils and adults will be accounted for by repeated attendance. The data provided makes it difficult to judge how many of these contacts were new. However, an estimate can be formed by calculating the total number of pupils from new schools (i.e. schools that had not visited for two years prior to Magpie) that attended sessions. This amounted to about 13,440 (this figures does not include 'first-time' pupils from schools who already visited). This represents a substantial contribution towards the NW Hub target of 38,000 new pupil sessions for this period.

Comments from museum educators confirm that Magpie has helped some museums to attract some new schools. In some cases, museums found that Magpie helped them to successfully market sessions which had not been very popular in the past. This was because teachers were able to better understand their curriculum value or because they seemed more attractive as part of a cross-curricular enrichment programme than they did in relation to a particular subject (this seems to have been the case with regard to the City Tours offered by the People's History Museum and the Every Picture tells a Story session at the Manchester Art Gallery.)

Some museums have experienced a sharp growth in take up of sessions generally. Manchester Art Gallery reports a 76% increase, of which Magpie visits are a tiny fraction. This gallery has run into problems due to overcrowding and has decided to reduce the number of daily bookings from 10 to 8. This gallery does not require Magpie to raise the volume of visits.

11.2 Awareness

Museum and gallery educators believed that Magpie had provided them with the opportunity to communicate to teachers, 'what we can do'. In particular, they believed, that participating teachers had become more aware of the specialist areas of learning that museums are targeting. One museum educator felt that her museum had assumed that teachers would understand the cross-curricular opportunities that sessions offered, but that it had taken the Magpie project to make it clear what the opportunities were and how they could be used.

11.3 Networking and Training Sessions

Some of the museum and gallery educators valued the professional development that they shared, alongside teachers, as part of Magpie. They valued the opportunity to improve their understanding of literacy teaching and to gain an up-to-date understanding of how teachers are trying to address goals such as cross-curricular provision and enrichment. In particular, they were encouraged to enhance the use of speaking and listening as part of their sessions. In some cases educators have used or emphasised particular teaching strategies, such as the use of talk partners, as a result of their involvement in Magpie, and in some cases this practice has been spread in their museums by updating the guidance which is issued to other educators and freelancers or by the way that sessions have been modified or informal training provided.

One museum described how they had been encouraged by their involvement in Magpie to make greater use of paired discussion and white boards for low ability groups, group sentence construction, hot seating, talk partners and group drama:

> "Some of these techniques were there already but we have pushed them on a bit – for example getting pupils to use partner talk before feeding back to group"

Discussion of the value of these sessions does suggest some professional development needs for some museum and gallery educators. In some cases, however, those museum or gallery educators who might have benefit from particular sessions were not able to attend or the museum may not have been able to cascade learning from such sessions back to all of its educators. Two museum educators expressed a desire to deepen their knowledge of teaching by having the opportunity to visit or spend time in schools. One museum was helped by Magpie to identify a particular professional development opportunity for its team of educators, which was to understand the teaching techniques known as "brain gym". In this case, the Primary Consultant was able, through the Magpie network, to supply professional development, in the form of one of its Lead Practitioners, a Quality Development Advisor from the Wythenshawe Education Action Zone.

Museum educators also found it useful to find out more about how other museums are developing their practice. Network sessions were often used to book in particular visits to particular museums suggesting that face to face contact and a dedicated meeting can be a very effective way of helping teachers to commit to planning and make contact with key informants.

11.4 New or Modified Sessions

Particularly during the first phase, Magpie stimulated or supported the development of a number of new or strongly modified sessions at three

museums. Two new sessions were custom built to meet the demands of particular schools. This led to considerable enthusiasm as well as investment in time and money, with a legacy of new sessions that the museums can offer to all schools. Data from museums shows that the new sessions generated 34 out of a total of 579 Magpie school visits (Appendix 1). The museum staff agreed that Magpie had helped them to design, pilot and evaluate these sessions. However, one new session that was developed during phase 1 has not proved to be particularly successful, receiving only 8 bookings in total, which suggests that working in partnership with one school may be too narrow a basis to develop popular sessions.

These museums also expressed a concern that Magpie did not provide the resources to support new session development and that a more appropriate model of partnership was for museums to offer sessions which were sufficiently flexible so that they could be tweaked or adapted to meet the needs of particular groups. This kind of flexibility was facilitated by Magpie because it provided face-to-face contact between teachers and lead museum educators, who were in a position to decide how sessions could be adapted.

Beyond such adaptation, where teachers wanted more specific learning, which was not supplied in one of the museum's sessions, then that teacher would need to deliver it herself, either as a teacher-led session at the museum or back in the classroom. This has been supported by Magpie where, usually through some additional Inset, museum and gallery educators have helped teachers to plan a teacher-led session or where a lead-practitioner has delivered such a session for them.

These experiences remind us that museums do not have the resources to provide the customised service that an extensive integration of museum learning into the curriculum might demand. However, Magpie does suggest that built-in flexibility in sessions, combined with intelligent booking systems, will help museums to remain responsive to the variety of teaching and learning needs that Magpie is helping to stimulate. Empowering of teachers to make independent use of museums and galleries can also add to capacity and flexibility.

One of the Hub museums has independently, but over the same period as Magpie, redeveloped two of its sessions to make them more engaging and lively. This has involved the development of characters and narratives, and an emphasis on learning through speaking and listening. This approach provides a framework within which children can explore and interpret the collection and they also offer considerable potential to stimulate and support different kinds of writing. The convergence between the approach of this museum and that of Magpie has helped to confirm and encourage the museum. Magpie also provided this museum with an opportunity to test-drive its new sessions and has shown how this kind of approach can support an extended programme of learning in the classroom. This success, confirmed by improved teacher feedback, has encouraged the museum to continue to improve its sessions and to continue to provide professional development for

its educators and freelancers so that they are able to maximise the impact of these sessions. Another museum educator confirmed:

"The St Martin's training has informed the development of new sessions …issues around paired talking…character frame development…certain asking of questions…"

11.5 Professional Development for Teachers

A number of museums reported that the Primary Consultant and Magpie had helped them develop and/or market further inset for teachers from Magpie schools which were delivered either in schools or at the museum. This additional inset might help teachers to make more extensive and extended use of a particular museum, perhaps developing, self-led visits. Where inset was provided to a whole staff this supported the role of Magpie in disseminating museum and gallery education throughout a school.   Many of the Hub museums are looking to develop their provision of professional development for teachers and Magpie seems to have helped them to do this.

There is some uncertainty on the part of some museum and gallery educators as to just how they should be supporting teachers who want to make more extended and more integrated use of museums and galleries. Some institutions are already quite active in providing different inset opportunities for teachers – both museum and school based. There are also some particular projects, some of which are Hub and others which are museum based, which are seeking to build more lasting partnerships between schools and museums. Magpie provides an opportunity, not just to sustain innovations in teaching practice for participant teachers, but also to help museums and galleries to continue to contribute to teaching and learning over and beyond particular sessions. This is important because this ongoing partnership is likely to yield mutual learning which will improve practice on both sides.

12.0   The Role of the Primary Consultant

The development, recruitment to, co-ordination, team management, dissemination and growth of the Magpie initiative has formed the core of the work of the Primary Consultant. However, this initiative has also provided the recognition and relationships through which the Primary Consultant has been able to contribute in other ways to her wider role – that of mediating, brokering and communicating between the museum and the education sectors. This activity has been documented by the Primary Consultant and consists of a diverse range of conversations, meetings, presentations, contributions to specific projections, exchanges of advice and guidance, making connections, raising awareness and spreading of good experiences. Such activity is very difficult to evaluate since the impact is likely to be dispersed and is medium to long term. What follows is intended to be representative rather than complete and draws on interviews and comments from key stakeholders. It is not intended as an appraisal of performance of the post-holder but as an exploration of the type of impact that it is possible for such a role to exercise.

12.1 Quality of Sessions

The Primary Consultant has been able to observe a large number of sessions and has routinely provided comments and suggestions to museums after these observations. This means that museums have been able to access an up-to-date educational perspective on their sessions, particularly in light of specific literacy objectives which teachers are targeting. This kind of detailed feedback is not always forthcoming from teachers. There is some evidence that teachers do not always supply critical comments on sessions since they may not want to be seen to be 'hard' on educators or ungrateful.

Museum educators have valued these comments. One museum educator said that they had been able to make some small improvements in their sessions as a result of them. Another museum said that it was the Primary Consultant's comments which had influenced their decision to review particular sessions before others and that they routinely asked her to comment on new proposals:

"Anything that we come up with as an idea we tend to run it by [name of Primary Consultant]"

A museum educator reflected that it was difficult for museums to accept criticism about their sessions and teaching, but that the Primary Consultant had been equipped with the know-how and experience to do this with positive outcomes:

"I think that she has shaken us up!"

 In a number of cases, this activity has led to the Primary Consultant being invited to make a more substantial contribution to the development work of museums. She was able to contribute to radical reworking of very popular sessions at Manchester Museum, in a way that was regarded as "very useful" by the museum. At the People's History Museum, she was asked to read and advise on the script and observe trial performances. She has been able to draw on her experience of other museum sessions, the trust that the museum has of her judgement, her knowledge of schools' needs and her professional relationship with the LEA Consultant leading this project. In this particular case, this involvement has encouraged the museum to make the session more interactive, incorporating thought-tracking, a teaching strategy that has been promoted by Magpie.

This extensive first-hand experience of museum and gallery education sessions also equips the Primary Consultant to offer advice to teachers and educators who are looking for particular inputs.

12.2 Contribution to other Projects

The Primary Consultant has been able to contribute to other related initiatives that have taken place in Manchester over the last two years. In particular, the Primary Consultant has been able to work closely with other LEA consultants

to collaborate on particular projects. Collaboration was particularly strong in the case of the My Manchester project which was led by the Humanities Advisor and sponsored by Manchester University. The two consultants devised a scheme which served as a framework to organise and recognise existing activity, such as Magpie, as well as stimulating additional cross-curricular, locally based learning. Phase 1 Magpie activity led to performance, art work and presentations which could be showcased in the My Manchester event – alongside a diverse range of work from other schools. Through collaboration, the two consultants showed how networks and good practice could be shared and disseminated across two initiatives and how participating institutions could be encouraged to extend the range of projects and partners with whom they work.

In a similar way, the Primary Consultant was able to help bring together the necessary partners to renew the focus and then to deliver the Peterloo Project – an intervention which had stalled. In this case, the Primary Consultant was able to respond to a curriculum intervention that the LEA was seeking to make, and then through her knowledge of local experiences and developments, was able to bring together a museum that was seeking to develop provision in this area, a school that was ready and able to develop and pilot new materials and activities and the teachers and museum educators who could make particular contributions to the materials and processes. As a result, in July 2006, the Peterloo Project, which consists of a session at the People's History Museum, downloadable materials and a guided tour of the St Peter's Field district was formally launched at St Mary Rolls School.(details and resource available on www.mewan.net)

In a similar way, the Primary Consultant has been able to make connections with Dig Manchester, a University led archaeology project, which has meant that archaeological learning sessions were also offered to Magpie schools which they might combine with museum sessions.

In the case of other 'creativity' projects, which have shared participants with Magpie, such as the Manchester Arts Initiative and the Creative Partnership's Initial Teacher Training Project, the Primary Consultant has sought to share information and good practice and encourage a collaborative approach to raising the profile of museum and gallery education. This joined up approach is being supported by the Hub's on-going education plan: a new part-time post, based at the Whitworth Gallery, has been created to support initial teacher education and the teacher appointed to this role has had the chance to develop her capability as a lead practitioner within Magpie for two years.

12.3 Building Links with other agencies

The Primary Consultant has had meetings and developed or renewed contacts with a wide range of relevant organisations and partnerships within Manchester. In some cases, these initial associations have already led to co-operation in particular tasks and in other cases the basis for such closer co-operation has been prepared. These organisations include Urbis, Manchester

Cathedral, Dig Manchester, the Engage group, Ghyll Head OEC, Manchester Arts Initiative, Excellence in Cities and local Creative Partnerships.

Through particular projects the Primary Consultant has gained access to other networks, such as the Primary Numeracy and Literacy Strategy groups and the History co-ordinators through which she has been able to raise awareness of Magpie and museum education opportunities

12.4 Communication and Advocacy within the LEA

Within the LEA, the Primary Consultant has been able to communicate the achievements of the project, upwards, to the Head of Innovation (Primary) and, sideways, to other consultants. Interviews with LEA officers, reveal a positive view of the partnership with the museum sector. The capacity of the Primary Consultant to recruit schools and museums to the project, the effects of the professional development that has taken place and the way in which the project has been integrated into the planning and priorities of the authority are all valued. Trust and confidence in the role of Primary Consultant has developed over time, showing that LEA officers fully identify with the objectives of the project.

However, planned developments in the structure and finances of the LEA are likely to have implications for the post and for Magpie and it is likely to be necessary to adapt the role of the Primary Consultant to the new structures. There has also been some confusion about the role that the LEA play on the Steering Group for the initiative which needs attention. There is perhaps scope for a greater co-ordination between the MEP's well developed approach to supporting the tracking and measurement of progress in literacy generally, and in schools deserving of particular support, and the targeting of literacy within Magpie. Although there is no conflict between the work of Magpie, and the more general strategies of the LEA, there does not appear to be an entirely comprehensive shared understanding and there may be opportunities for mutual support which have not yet been fully exploited.

12.5 Professional Development

In effect, a key strand of the work carried out by the Primary Consultant has been professional development. This has taken a variety of forms. It includes the organisation and planning, with outside consultants, of 'training days', but it also includes planned opportunities for lead practitioners to develop their capacity to mentor and guide others and the modelling of how to do museum education sessions. This work has directly contributed to the Magpie programme but it has also helped teachers to develop skills to go on to take on other roles outside of Magpie. A teacher who has worked for two years, first as a lead practitioner then as a co-ordinating practitioner, has built on that experience to go on to take up a new part-time job with the Hub to support the contribution that NW museums make to initial teacher training. The Primary Consultant has directly contributed to school Inset and helped a number of schools to draw down museum provided inset, over and beyond Magpie network sessions, both at school and at museums. In addition, as mentioned

above, the Primary Consultant has helped a museum to provide professional development for its staff and has provided individual contacts and advice for particular museum staff who are looking for particular professional development opportunities.

This is perhaps an area of activity which could have a higher profile and possibly be more pro-active. There may be opportunities to work with other agencies to explore the possibility of using other schemes, such as the Teacher Placements scheme.

12.6 Audit

The Primary Consultant is in the process of carrying out an audit to identify which Manchester primary schools are accessing museums and galleries and which are, for whatever reason, 'under-consuming.' This is a vitally important task since it can be used to guide the expansion of Magpie to support those schools whose need is greatest. Such an audit can also help museums and galleries to understand the factors that inhibit take up and help them to develop particular strategies, such as out-reach or web provision, which may overcome particular barriers. There may be further opportunities to co-ordinate this audit with other tracking and monitoring work which is carried out by the MEP to ensure that the development needs of schools are supported in a well-coordinated manner and also to link this with the monitoring carried out by museums and galleries who, collectively, are in a position to know which schools are accessing their services.

12.7 Recognition of Achievement

Part of the Primary Consultant's role has been to recognise achievement in museum and gallery education. She has attended many events, presentations, launches and celebrations of a very wide range of museum/creativity and related activities to lend her support. The Magpie network has been an effective system for getting schools to recognise one another's achievements. Where particular schools have managed to achieve particular awards, such as the Leading Aspect Award, the Primary Consultant has publicised this and encouraged other schools to follow. Individual teachers have been encouraged to gain recognition for the professional development through St Martin's certification and opportunities for this have been facilitated.

This is an important function since it helps to confirm and communicate the progress which has been made. It might be valuable for the Primary Consultant, together with the Hub, to explore whether more use might be made of awards to recognise and celebrate the successful development of museum and gallery learning.

13.0 Partnership

This initiative offers a model for the development of a partnership between the educational and museum sectors. Each of the sectors has itself been represented by a partnership: the NW Hub and the MEP. This brief section is concerned to examine how these partnerships have developed and what lessons may be drawn for the future and for other similarly placed partnerships.

In the first instance, there is evidence that the initiative has been a driver for the ongoing development of both of the partnerships involved. The MEP has been able to recruit schools to the project and thereby support its objectives of curriculum development and school improvement. At the same time the NW Hub have developed a shared project through which they have collectively been able to increase their educational impact.

At a structural level the partnership has developed a steering group and a management post, recently extended for two years, and, on the ground, it has developed a network of experienced and expert teacher practitioners, a stronger network of teachers and museum/gallery educators, additional curriculum and planning resources and has raised understanding and expectations from partnership work.

These achievements help to make clear what the benefits of partnership can be, particularly when there is a commitment to long term co-working rather than a project by project approach. Furthermore the partnership has been able to progress from the recognition that working together could serve separate objectives towards the situation where the partnership is jointly setting shared objectives. This has started to happen because aims and funding from the museum sector were able to encompass the setting of recognisable educational outcomes within the educational sector: professional development, attainment, curriculum resources.

If, however, the partnership is to continue to develop it will be necessary for the roles and the programmes to continue to meet the needs of both partners since funding depends on demonstrating continued impact and there are likely to be alternative opportunities and partnerships which will compete with this particular partnership. As, over time, personnel change and institutions reorganise or evolve, the partnership will have to adapt. In the case of this initiative, restructuring of the MEP and capacity issues in some of the Hub museums provide such challenges.

There is also a need to continue to develop understanding of outcomes so that they can be fully shared. Magpie has been successful in persuading teachers that learning that goes on in museums does contribute to curriculum objectives and while the museum sector understands that their objectives are served by museum education that goes on in the classroom there are no formal mechanisms for museums to recognise this achievement. This evaluation is a step towards such recognition and it is a positive feature of this initiative that the NW Hub has invested in an evaluation which serves, to

some degree, to improve understanding and recognition of what has been achieved.

It should also be recognised that there remain some wants on the part of some partners which have not been fully satisfied. Some museum educators, while they value the information and opportunities that the Primary Consultant has provided, are still looking for better information about emerging educational developments and opportunities. It is difficult to know whether this frustration is, ultimately, due to delay and uncertainty in local educational development or whether it is due to extended communication chains or sub-optimum programmes of meetings.

One educator said: "I want to be sitting down with advisors…I want to hear what their concerns are…I want to pre-plan and know how we can support. We should be hearing what is in their minds."

The MEP is interested in further evidence of impact upon achievement, such as for example analysis of the relationship between progress in reading and writing. Some schools expressed frustration that resources did not permit them to participate more extensively.

14.0   Barriers to Progress

There are some issues of communication and responsibility particularly in relation to meeting cycles which have been thrown up by this partnership development and which require ongoing review.

There were some particular obstacles reported by particular schools:

- Costs of transport
- Demands made by SATs which did not adequately recognise achievement and educational outcomes relating to museum education
- Setting could work against a cross-curricular approach

Museums reported other obstacles:

- Capacity constraints associated with staff, learning or other spaces (e.g. lunch spaces)
- Competition for priority and for time with respect to other projects and other activities within and beyond Manchester

More generally, a fragmentation of activity can lead to apparent conflict or confusion and the multiplication of administrative and time costs of communication and networking. Some museums and schools find that they are involved, or could be involved, in similar projects run by EiC, the Hub, individual institutions and CP. This is likely to limit learning and discourage dissemination. A freelance evaluator in Manchester said that it was difficult to gain an understanding of the different initiatives. It could lead to territorialism.

It has been a particular success of this initiative that it has found ways to join up initiatives, eg. the engagement of the Wythenshawe system into Magpie.

Some museums talked about the way they could take learning from Magpie into other non-Hub and Hub programmes. For example, Manchester Museum mentioned its Gateway to University programme while Manchester Art Gallery mentioned its link with EiC.

15.0 Moving Forward

The phased structure of Magpie has provided a number of opportunities for learning and programme refinement, for example, the co-ordination and standardisation of assessment during the second phase and the streamlining of the toolkit. Planning for phase 3 has taken account of the needs of teachers to gain a better knowledge of collections for their planning and opportunities for museum-based discussions and pre-visits have been created. The following represent areas with potential for further improvement:

1. Magpie has encouraged teachers to integrate museum education sessions into their schemes of work. This implies that integration will become a criterion to judge sessions and will influence take up. This leads teachers to value flexibility in provision, which is costly for museums. There may be scope for museum educators, perhaps working with teachers, to find ways of developing common frameworks for sessions, where different activities or content can be slotted in as per demand, by switching the focus from one exhibit to another or by varying the learning activity in relation to the same exhibit.

2. There is some confusion and dissatisfaction with the operation of the Steering Group and of the subordinate groups relating to the management of Magpie. Review and discussion will help to determine the right frequency, membership and responsibility for these various groups.

3. There is scope for museums to extend their involvement in professional development for teachers, to support the wider practice of museum education, building upon existing good practice and Magpie experiences and outcomes.

4. There is scope for access to museum education to be extended within schools that are already users and other schools. Differentiated support and resources and flexible provision of museum education (eg using outreach and on-line services) can support inclusion.

5. There is scope for museum educators to work together to develop and make shared use of new or modified sessions or resources, some of which might be used flexibly at more than one institution or place of learning. Such an approach might help to meet some museum capacity issues as well as school access issues and help to share experience and expertise between various schools and museums.

6. There is scope for museums to develop ways to improve their understanding and use of the outcomes of the more extended use of museum education that has been achieved through Magpie. The Magpie portfolios and toolkits may support this. Museums could, for example, play a role in disseminating, to other teachers, schemes and resources that could extend particular museum sessions or they may find that they could organise or adapt suites of sessions (not necessarily at just one museum) to provide ongoing support for the curriculum.

7. In the light of the above there is scope for museums to review the design, process and delivery of their education sessions taking into account the way that learning in those sessions may relate to other learning in the classroom and also considering what teachers, teacher assistants and other adults can learn from and bring to such sessions and how their learning may help them to extend museum education beyond programmed sessions.

8. There is scope for teachers, teaching assistants, families and pupils to make additional use of museums in ways that would complement and extend museum-led sessions and support, over the long-term both formal and informal learning.

9. The development of a network of museum-using teacher practitioners represents a considerable opportunity for both the education and museum sectors. The former will want to use practitioners to model and support new teaching approaches to other teachers. Museums could explore ways of drawing upon these teachers to contribute to a range of activities: formative evaluation, development of new services and sessions, research school needs, communicating with schools, specialised teaching skills.

10. Magpie has shown how museums can contribute to the integration of speaking and listening with the structured development of writing. Given the growing recognition of the role of speaking and listening in all learning, this is a connection which bears further exploration. There are likely to be possibilities for the development of speaking and listening in museums and as a means of extending the range of museum learning.

11. If Magpie is to have an impact not only on participant teachers and their classes but upon their schools then continued work is required to provide proportionate support for school improvement. This may involve the provision of additional lead practitioner or museum educator support for the teachers at that school who are leading change or, where appropriate, bringing additional key teachers from a particular school into network meetings.

12. There is scope to review how the time of lead practitioners and co-ordinating practitioners is used to support their colleagues and what is the best way of linking lead practitioners to particular schools.

13. To sustain the influence of this initiative it would be desirable to create a lasting lead practitioner role in each primary school (which might well be combined with other functions). The current plan to sustain the involvement of the current phase 2 participants for another year, points to such a strategy. Such a role might be supported and recognised by the MEP (through the Primary Consultant) and the Hub through the provision of professional development, communications, networks and access to learning opportunities.

Appendix 1

Visits to Museums

RECORD OF VISITS TO HUB AND FIRST PARTNER MUSEUMS BY MAGPIE SCHOOLS 2002-2006

Museum	Number of Magpie Schools Visiting 2004-6*	Magpie Schools Visiting 2002-4	Number of Schools Gained by Magpie	Pupils Involved 2004-6	Pupils Involved 2002-4	Pupils gained by Magpie New Pupils	Adults Involved	Existing Sessions	Newly Devised Sessions	Self-programmed Sessions	Total Sessions
Manchester Art Gallery	40	20	20	5873	1694	4179	1080	175	7	25	207
Manchester Museum	28	12	16	3897	607	3290	511	94	21	17	132
Peoples' History	21	5	16	2189	186	2003	352	73	0	2	75
MSIM	29	8	21	3523	432	3091	538	101	0	19	120
Whitworth Gallery	6	7	0	1451	574	877		8	6	31	45
Totals	124	52	73	16933	3493	13440	2481	471	34	94	579

*The total number of schools directly involved in Magpie was 42. However, many of these schools visited more than one museum.

Appendix 2

Note on Genre

The concept of writing genres has exercised a powerful influence on the development and implementation of the NLS. Put simply, the thinking was that literacy learning should explicitly focus on writing in different genres, such as non-chronological report or narrative, because such genres were structurally distinct. In particular, it was held to be a mistake to believe that pupils would be able to develop the capability for these genres if their vocabulary and grammar learning were confined to a particular genre, e.g. story writing (Wray, 2004)

Because of the importance of genre in the teaching and assessment of writing it was decided, for the second phase of Magpie, to ask teachers to focus on one particular genre for the purposes of assessment. The intention was not to confine literacy teaching and learning to a single genre but to raise the profile of a particular genre so that a) it would be addressed and b) progress in attainment over a relatively short period would be more visible.

Some teachers identified focus on genre as an explanation of impact:

"The huge focus on a specific project and relating it to a specific genre. The children have then gained knowledge/vocabularly/enthusiasm and a desire to learn about it."

However, teachers were asked to assess writing using generic criteria (not genre specific criteria) which reduces the extent to which assessment is measuring genre specific progress. In practice, there was some variability about the way in which teachers defined genres, making it less clear that assessments have, in fact, all taken place within a single genre.

Some teachers expressed the concern that this focus on a particular genre was too restrictive and was leading to a disproportionate amount of time and status being devoted to just one kind of writing. Some teachers were also disappointed that externally devised writing assessments, voluntary SATs, might well focus on a different genre. As a result there was a concern that the improved levels demonstrated in Magpie writing might not be reflected in voluntary SATs performance.

These issues suggest a need for a review of just which writing outcomes Magpie is seeking to influence. It is not desirable to distort teaching and learning for the purposes of evaluation. It may be more appropriate to ask teachers to identify the several genres they plan to teach and to assess writing generically since it is arguable that progress in writing which can be demonstrated in several genres is both the desirable and the measurable outcome. This is not to say that teaching and learning, including that involving museums, may not be particularly targeted a particular genre. However, within a scheme of work it should be possible to address a number of related genres in a coherent manner.

It is clear from the variety of ways that schools have responded to Magpie that one and the same museum session or collection can play a role in schemes of work that address different genres: museum and gallery education does not constrain literacy education in this sense. The decision about genres seems to be one about the organisation of teaching and learning – how different specialised learning is to be built up into a broad capability to write in different contexts, following appropriate rules, to meet different purposes.

Appendix 3

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