

Culture, Creativity and Extended Services In and Around Schools

The creative and cultural sector provides inspirational, high quality and accessible activities and services for children, young people, families and the wider community. This document is a guide for **Extended Schools Remodelling Advisers** (ESRAs) and their colleagues, providing practical examples of the role the **arts, museums, libraries** and **archives** can play in delivering the core offer at primary and secondary school level of:

- high quality childcare available 8am – 6pm all year round;
- a varied menu of activities such as homework clubs, study support, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs;
- parenting support including family learning sessions;
- swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services; and
- wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.

Beyond the practical examples are short sections on culture and children's participation, and information on suggested next steps for ESRAs. Extended services is not a new concept for the cultural sector, which has many years experience in delivering services for children and families which align with the core offer, for example with over ¹75% of public library services providing after school study support programmes.

This provides a strong foundation for maximising the opportunities extended services brings, widening access to cultural services and improving outcomes for local children, families and communities.

Why should all children & young people have access to high quality, cultural and creative experiences?

Culture and creativity inspire children and young people to dream a different future, live a life that is fulfilled, develop skills that help them tread their own path, and increase their understanding of the world around them. As well as these individual benefits of culture and creativity, it has the unquestionable social importance in building sustainable communities, and a strong economic case that is particularly pertinent to schools and the education sector.

The creative industries is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK, accounting for 7.3% of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2004, and growing by an average of 5% per annum between 1997 and 2004, compared with an

¹ DCMS, http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Libraries/ 2006

average of 3% for the economy as a whole². In the North West, the sector provides over 5% of employment in the region, with 29% growth from 1995 to 2002, and a further 18% projected growth to 2010³ - a major part of the job market for current and future generations.

And beyond the creative industries, the broader economy in the 21st Century will continue to place even greater emphasis on skills and attributes such as *creativity, innovation, imagination, flexibility, communication* and *risk taking*. The cultural and creative sector can support schools and children's services in *nurturing* and *developing* these skills in our children and young people through regular activities and programmes delivered as part of extended services.

Examples of Culture within the Core Offer

The following section contains a number of examples of how the cultural sector can help you to develop and deliver the core offer for children, young people and families. However, this is not an exhaustive list and not all examples will be appropriate for your locality - you may come up with a range of other ideas through consultation with children & young people, schools, families, communities and the cultural sector. We suggest that you contact your Cultural Services department within your local authority, which can offer local expertise, guidance and information on developing a strategic approach to cultural activities as part of the core offer.

HIGH QUALITY CHILDCARE

- Providing workforce development for childcare professionals, ensuring creativity is fundamental to the approach of those working with children (training, continuous professional development, buddy schemes, placements and/or familiarisation sessions)
- Resources and support materials for childcare providers (including childminders) on creative and cultural activities which can be delivered as part of breakfast, after-school and holiday provision (e.g. book and activity boxes, toolkits, musical instruments and equipment)
- Cultural activities/workshops delivered on-site within childcare settings, delivered by sector professional working alongside playworkers (e.g. story telling, artist residencies, museums outreach, music workshops)

² DCMS, Creative Industries Economic Estimates Statistical Bulletin, September 2006

³ Our Agenda for the Arts in the North West 2006-8, Arts Council England, July 2006

VARIED MENU OF ACTIVITIES

- Range of fun, engaging cultural and creative experiences for children and young people (both on and off school site; in term time and holidays) designed and delivered with, for and by children and young people
- Study support, homework clubs, out of school hours learning and quiet 'chill out' spaces provided through libraries, museums, galleries and archives
- Links with artists trained in using the Plus enrichment materials, for literacy and numeracy study support in secondary schools
- Young people's Arts Award for secondary students
www.artsaward.org.uk
- Good practice in developing whole-school approaches to creative learning and partnerships with creative and cultural organisations
www.creative-partnerships.com
- Access to resources (objects & collections, expertise, specialist professional staff and volunteers, artist residencies, resource packs etc) related to cultural activities which can enhance special interest clubs and activity sessions

PARENTING SUPPORT

- Family learning and parenting support through cultural professionals and venues including museums, libraries, galleries, archives and arts centres (informal education/learning space)
- Homework support sessions for parents delivered through libraries
- Information for parents and carers on cultural activities available for families and children in their local area both in term time and school holidays.
- Skills development on literacy, numeracy, communication and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) delivered through museums, libraries, archives and the arts
- Non-judgmental, informal approach to engage parents and families, especially hard to reach and vulnerable groups
- Arts-based activities for parents, aimed at relaxation, providing personal time, introspection and learning

SWIFT AND EASY REFERRAL

- Opportunities for gifted and talented children and young people to pursue their interests through access to specialist support (for example instrumental teaching, theatre, arts and dance companies)
- Integral component of support services, providing positive experiences to support mental health and emotional well-being, including speech and language development through the arts
- Access to specialist support provided by the cultural sector e.g. information specialists in libraries, reader development specialists, subjects specialists in libraries, museums, galleries and archives

COMMUNITY ACCESS

- Community access to school arts facilities (especially through Specialist Arts and Music Colleges)
- Adult learning opportunities offered in the arts, either for arts skills development or as a tool for literacy or numeracy skills development
- Schools can be information gateways to cultural activities for communities
- Information on opportunities for adult/community learning, careers, training and volunteering opportunities in creative and cultural sector
- Libraries are information hubs for the community – can provide access to information on careers, health, local services, opportunities etc
- The People's Network – libraries providing access to ICT and internet

Culture and Children's Participation

MLA North West, Arts Council England, North West and the North West Museums Hub actively promote and value the involvement of children and young people in decisions that affect them. We encourage programmes and activities that are designed with, for and by children and young people.

The cultural sector has great experience in involving children and young people's voices and opinions at the heart of their work, designing services in direct response to local need. Through creative activities and the safe, informal environment of cultural venues, local authorities can engage children, young people and families, especially hard to reach and vulnerable groups.



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What to do next?

To develop sustainable models of cultural activity in extended services, local authorities should ensure that cultural services are involved in the strategic planning and development process. This could include:

- expert guidance and input in developing and implementing the local authority extended services strategy in relation to culture and the core offer;
- ensuring local cultural assets, venues, organisations and programmes are included within local community audits of existing provision;
- aligning local cultural strategies with extended services, maximising efficient use of resources that make a difference to children, families, schools and communities;
- briefing the local cultural sector on opportunities for involvement in extended services and guidance throughout the development process;
- brokering relationships between the cultural sector, schools and other settings (childcare, out of school providers, youth provision);
- supporting evidence and data collection to measure the impact and value of services to children, families, schools and communities; and
- working with ESRAs to develop a sustainable infrastructure for extended services in relation to culture and the core offer.

To ensure that extended services in your area fully benefit from culture and creativity, we suggest that, as first point of call, ESRAs make contact with the Head of Cultural Services or equivalent senior managers in arts, libraries, museums and archives services in your local authority.

For further information and support, you can also contact:

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Culture, Children & Young People in the North West

Our vision is that all children and young people have access to high quality and enjoyable creative and cultural experiences and participate in decision making about what these should be. Arts Council England, North West, MLA North West and the North West Museums Hub are working with the cultural sector and partners to achieve this through our regional strategies, projects and initiatives for children and young people.

This work is based upon the following principles. All children and young people in the North West should have:

- access to a wide range of diverse, high quality cultural and creative experiences from early years through to adulthood;
- access to high standards of arts and cultural education and sustained creative learning opportunities;
- the right to have their cultural and creative expression valued and respected by others; and
- opportunities to improve their creative skills and talents for personal fulfilment and to contribute to the creative economy.

Regional Adviser: Culture, Children and Young People

Arts Council England, North West, the Museums Hub for the North West, and MLA North West have jointly created a post of Regional Adviser for Culture, Children and Young People from April 2006. The main purpose of the post is to represent the cultural sector in working with children's services, demonstrating how culture and creativity can contribute to the five key *Every Child Matters* outcomes for children and young people.

We aim to achieve this by:

- working with and supporting the cultural sector to respond to the change for children agenda;
- advocating to children's services and supporting the development of increased access and opportunities to cultural provision for children, young people and families; and
- valuing children and young people's views and opinions, actively promoting their participation in the design, commissioning, delivery, monitoring and review of local services

For further information, call MLA North West on 01925 625 052 or visit www.mlanorthwest.org.uk