

The Source

Connecting vocational learning, enterprise education and creativity



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Vocational and work-related learning have long been a feature of secondary education. Along with the emerging enterprise education entitlement, these are now being prioritised in schools as never before. This determination to equip students with the skills to embrace change, implement new ideas and develop an understanding and awareness of business practice resonates strongly with the creativity agenda. There is a valid overlap between promoting 'skills for creativity' and 'creative behaviours' with 'skills for enterprise and employability'.

Creative Partnerships has begun to link potential employers in the creative industries to the education sector. This has led to a range of approaches that engage schools and industries, including:

- enterprise projects, typically involving product design and/or marketing
- students operating and running a business
- raising awareness of career opportunities within the creative industries
- regeneration projects
- creative practitioners' direct involvement with vocational course delivery
- projects that develop employability and entrepreneurial skills, and promote both the enterprise and creativity agendas

Whilst vocational learning usually has a curricular basis, unsurprisingly enterprise education embraces diversity of delivery. It is essential that this range of experience is available to all young people across the country.

There are some common characteristics of successful projects, which connect vocational learning, enterprise education and creativity. Key among them are the involvement of multiple stakeholders to give real impact, planning for progression to give the projects built-in sustainability and addressing issues of capacity to be able to deliver over the long term. Other critical factors for success are: the school's commitment to sustaining and developing projects; young people's involvement in identifying and developing the projects; clear and focused links to the formal curriculum and KS4 qualifications.

Effective projects also include a wider understanding of the project's role in changing the 'learning climate' of the school.

Within the wider context, building strong relationships with local regeneration agencies and education-business partnerships will support such projects. Finally, consciously developed 'win-win' outcomes, meeting the needs of learners and also informing the development of employers and businesses involved create the climate for success.

Creative Partnerships' programmes are starting to show the way to link creativity, vocational learning and enterprise education. To ensure a 21st century education for all young people these approaches must continue to be developed and sustained.

Vocational learning

Work-related learning (statutory from September 2004) is the over-arching concept within which vocational learning is located and involves:

- learning through the experience of work
- learning about work and working practices
- learning the skills for work

The applied nature of most arts learning is a strong basis for developing approaches to work-related and vocational learning in schools. This is particularly relevant when students can work directly with professionals other than teachers through programmes such as Creative Partnerships.

Enterprise education

Enterprise education is being implemented in schools from September 2005 in an effort to build a deeper and wider enterprise culture.

This encompasses:

- enterprise capability – including innovation, risk-management and risk-taking
- financial capability
- business and economic understanding including social enterprise

Thus the skills, competencies and mindset of enterprise education have clear resonance with creativity.

Creativity

Creativity can be defined as *'imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value'*. (DfES/DCMS, 1999)

Everyone has the capacity to be creative. Creativity is not unique to the arts. It is equally important to advances in the sciences, mathematics, technology, politics, and business and in all areas of everyday life.

When people are thinking and behaving creatively, they are:

- questioning and challenging
- making connections and seeing relationships
- envisaging what might be
- exploring ideas, keeping options open
- reflecting critically on ideas and outcomes (QCA 2003 www.qca.org.uk)

To develop young people's creative skills, educators need to teach creatively and teach for creativity.

Creative Partnerships

Creative Partnerships provides children across England with the opportunity to develop creativity in learning and to take part in cultural activities of the highest quality.

The ambitious, transformative programme works in over 700 schools in 36 areas of high deprivation around the country. The programme fosters sustainable partnerships between schools and the widest possible range of cultural and creative practitioners and organisations.

Creative Partnerships' projects aim to broaden learners' cultural experiences, animate all aspects of the curriculum and promote systemic school change. What's more, the school staff and creative practitioners themselves research, broker and share the practice of partnership working.

Case studies

Creative Careers Showcase

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Creative Partnerships, Slough

Creative Careers is an annual event for all 1500 year 9 students from all 11 secondary schools in Slough. It aims to raise the aspirations of young people and improve teachers' understanding about career opportunities in the cultural and creative industries. It forms part of and gives focus to a wider strategy, Slough's 'Creative Academy', a network of creative learning providers.

Creative Partnerships arranged the involvement of over 60 creative industry practitioners by funding small companies and individuals for their time and preparation, helping them learn to work differently, and to see the potential of their role as mentors and champions of their industry. Additionally Creative Partnerships has acted as an advocate to schools, teachers, parents and career advisors and as a catalyst in the wider partnership.

Creative Careers gives the opportunity to look at choices outside the academic career paths. This is vital as creativity is a neglected part of the curriculum. It has given me a deeper knowledge of career paths to pass on to students.

Teacher, Slough Grammar School

I enjoyed my time at Creative Partnerships. I have been inspired by what I saw and am considering a career that is creative.

year 9 student, Slough

Sharing the learning

- Clarity of focus in activity planning
- Importance of both structure and flexibility in partnership networks
- Support and preparation from Creative Partnerships is needed for creative practitioners to engage successfully with young people



Room 13

Creative Partnerships, Bristol

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www.network13.org.uk
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Hareclive Primary School, Bristol is now running the third official Room 13, and the first in England. The original Room 13 was founded in 1994 at Caol Primary School in Fort William, Scotland, but the ideas inherent in the project began in Edinburgh College of Art in the 1970s. They have been developed and refined through artist-in-residence posts held by Rob Fairley, the Project Founder.

Room 13 is a democratically run artists studio, operating along normal business lines. The difference is the management team is aged 8 to 11 years.

Hareclive Primary School hosted an election to nominate a management group of eight children in year six. A school mentor supports each of the elected group members as they take full responsibility for managing the Room 13 business. This includes everything from managing its bank account to working with the artist in residence, Shani Ali, to establish their version of Room 13, an art studio in a disused computer site in the school.

Following the success of its initial set up, students have been working with the film and media company Calling the Shots on an internet project, Digital Conversations. The project is developing a web link that connects the Room 13 projects at Hareclive Primary School in Bristol and Caol Primary School in Fort William, allowing pupils to share their ideas and work in progress (network13.org.uk).

Over time the role of Creative Partnerships has moved on, from acting as a catalyst at the outset to its current role as a watching brief. The young people from Room 13, Hareclive play an active role in dissemination and have spoken at a number of local and national conferences.

Sharing the learning

- Importance of giving real responsibility to young people
- Careful listening and responsiveness by Creative Partnerships to the needs and wishes of the young people
- Value of inter-school and inter-country partnerships

NLarge

Creative Partnerships, Bristol

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Since 2003 a group of young people from South Bristol aged 12-16 years have been learning documentary photography skills through the NLarge project, a collaboration between Creative Partnerships, Knowle West Media Centre and local youth organisations.

The group meets weekly and has worked with a wide range of professional photographers. As well as gaining a range of skills in camera technique and darkroom work, the young people have undertaken real commissions shooting live events. A number of their photographs have already been published, both in magazines and online.

The NLarge project aims to inspire and motivate young people to learn photography skills with which they can explore creativity and express their ideas.

Creative Partnerships continues to monitor the work and, more importantly, commissions real work from this group of young people.

Sharing the learning

- Importance of authenticity in making projects relevant and sustainable (i.e. setting practical briefs which have a valuable function in themselves e.g. documenting Creative Partnerships events)
- Need for extensive planning time and close partnership working from the outset to ensure needs and wishes of young people in the area are met
- Making links with relevant agencies, organisations, youth groups both locally and within the region to look at how learning from this project could inform similar sustainable projects

Elephant in the Playground

Creative Partnerships, Birmingham

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Pupils and staff from Queensbridge Arts College, Fox Hollies, a neighbouring special school, and Moor Green Infants School all worked with film, music and sound artists to create a film animation project entitled Elephant in the Playground. It was inspired by a five year old who, when asked what he wanted from his Creative Partnerships work replied he wanted an elephant in the playground. The film was premiered at Midlands Arts Centre and then at a 'red carpet' event at Queensbridge.

A group of 34 students, aged 6-18, participated from the three schools. Students from Queensbridge took on a leadership role in the project as part of their Young People's Arts Award, which they have now achieved. Students from Fox Hollies took on technical and mentoring roles as part of their work experience. All participants, both staff and pupils, worked with each other in every

aspect of filmmaking, from dubbing to drawing, from storyboarding to animating, composing to drawing.

The children gained confidence and self-esteem, a greater sense of responsibility and have become better at communicating with their peers and adults. Involvement in the project was regarded as a high status activity that produced something of acknowledged value.

Sharing the learning

- Importance of recognition and qualifications for students taking part
- Cross-phase collaboration can add value to all
- Peer collaboration develops leadership skills
- Creative skills are developed through a real world project

The Atlantis Project

Creative Partnerships, Black Country

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Nearly 900 pupils and staff from Deansfield High School took over the Atlantis nightclub for an evening following six months of preparation. Every child in the school prior to the night visited the nightclub. This enabled them to meet the staff and ask questions and also to use the venue as a classroom.

The project aimed to:

- develop young people's abilities and talents within a creative context relevant to their lives
- widen young people's experiences of opportunities for employment within the creative sector
- involve all young people in the school
- operate as a cross-curricular project, linking Performing Arts, Citizenship, Geography, Design and Technology, Science, Creative Writing, Numeracy, French and Business Studies with both creative industries and the wider community.

On the night, young people from all year groups within Deansfield High School put on dance, music and fashion shows, operated the sound and lighting systems and ran a French café (where only French was spoken). A team of pupils in headsets stage-managed the event linking with professional fire-blowing dance acts, and operating state-of-the-art lighting with pyrotechnics and special effects. Others worked alongside over 20 nightclub staff – as security staff on the door, bar staff, caterers, stage managers, DJ's and dancers.

Entrance was by ticket, designed by pupils and issued in advance. There was also a strict dress code in line with the club's policy. The bars served non-alcoholic drinks at agreed subsidised prices, and baguettes and frites were served in the cafe.

A group of year 11 students also worked with the local community safety partnership to produce a pocket-sized Safe Night Out Guide (SNOG), giving advice on health and safety, drugs awareness and the role of the police.

Sharing the learning

- The critical importance of senior management commitment in order to make a real difference to school culture
- Confidence and trust between partners is vital and requires time, leadership and investment of effort
- An initial but limited pump-priming role for Creative Partnerships funding. In subsequent years the school and other partners have taken on funding responsibility

Enter Prize Minds

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Creative Partnerships, Black Country



Working with two secondary schools, Holly Lodge and George Salter, Creative Partnerships Black Country devised a year 10 cross curricular project. The project brought together Sandwell Education Business Partnership, the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF), local business Partners in Print, and participatory arts organisation The Public.

Students were introduced to a range of design and presentation processes and asked to come up with imaginative ideas for a product that would be useful for the new year 7 students. Ideas generated included rulers and pencil cases that incorporated maps of the school site, bags and stationery, which were brought together as 'survival guides' that would help newly, arrived students feel welcome and confident in their new school. The way in which the project was taught made use of techniques from ideas generation and product design in business contexts. Students had to understand the realities of budgets and manufacturing requirements. They drew up detailed plans and instructions for Partners in Print to make prototype products, which were then exhibited.

Teams of year 10 students pitched their idea to year 6 pupils from feeder primary schools in a series of presentations. The winning products, a series of 'top trump' cards and a survival kit for year 7 students are to be manufactured by Partners in Print in time for September 2005.

Sharing the learning

- This project developed school identity and encouraged an applied form of peer leadership. It enabled year 10 students to practically consider the needs of year 7 students and encouraged mutual dialogue
- The project raised awareness of the wider mechanics of the creative design process and exposed the young people involved to the intricacies and complexities of planning, manufacturing and marketing
- It raised awareness of the viability of creative industry careers and the importance of design in product development
- The project brought together a diverse range of partners to support learning in both years 6 and 10, with clear mutual benefits for all involved
- Willingness of all schools involved to be flexible with timetabling and scheduling and the complex brokering undertaken by Creative Partnerships staff to enable the project to take place



Young People's Arts Awards

Creative Partnerships Cornwall,
Durham Sunderland and London South

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These three Creative Partnerships areas have been involved in Arts Council England's Young People's Arts Awards pilot programme.

The award is designed to appeal to a wide range of young people with different backgrounds and cultural interests. It aims to provide an incentive for young people to increase their participation in the arts while complementing the experiences they have in school. The award also provides opportunities for collaborative work and leadership that will promote young people's broader personal development.

In addition to building young people's enterprise skills, it ensures that the vocational dimension for learning is at the forefront. Thus awareness of opportunities in the creative industries is promoted.

The leadership and team working project encourages young people to take responsibility by passing on skills and organising events and performances. Evidence gathered from the young people shows their enthusiasm for this part of the award. In school settings, many are working with younger years groups or going out to primary schools.

Useful contacts

Business Dynamics runs programmes and events.

www.businessdynamics.org.uk

Business in the Community primarily starts with firms at national level. A Directory of contacts is available on the website. Case studies of finalists for Awards for.

www.bitc.org.uk/education

Centre for Education and Industry is a national and international centre for education-industry collaboration. They offer an accreditation programme for work-related learning. www.warwick.ac.uk/cei

Changemakers It supports projects that have a strong community focus and explores the concept of social enterprise.

www.changemakers.org.uk

Economics and Business Education Association

www.ebea.org.uk

Enterprise Insight is a business facing campaign working with all of the major partnership organisations.

www.enterpriseinsight.co.uk

Fairtrade Foundation offers a range of resources and activities to raise awareness of trade issues and global citizenship.

www.fairtrade.org.uk

Financial Services Authority (FSA) offers educational resources for KS2, KS3, KS4 in financial capability.

www.fsa.gov.uk/consumer

Museums Libraries and Archives Council

www.mla.gov.uk

National Education Business Partnership Network can provide contact details for local education business partnerships.

www.nebpn.org

National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts aims to help maximise the UK's creative and innovative potential.

www.nesta.org.uk

National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship offers teacher training and resources.

www.nfte.org.uk

Personal Finance Education Group (Pfeg) aims to help teachers develop financial capability in young people.

www.pfeg.org

Young Enterprise offers a number of programmes for ages 5-25, on a 'learning by doing' principle

www.young-enterprise.org.uk

XL (The Prince's Trust) tackles underachievement in schools for Y10 and Y11, by creating XL clubs in two year accredited programmes.

www.princes-trust.org.uk

Arts Council England's regional offices may be able to offer local advice on sourcing and using creative practitioners.

www.artscouncil.org.uk

exciting minds

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