

**A study of the  
Learning Performance Network  
an education programme of the  
Royal Shakespeare Company**



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**for**

**Creativity, Culture and Education**



**CREATIVITY CULTURE  
& EDUCATION**

**November 2010**

**This report was commissioned by Creativity, Culture and Education**

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## **A. Executive Summary**

In November 2009, Culture Creativity and Education commissioned a research team from Nottingham, Goldsmiths and the Institute of Education, University of London, to investigate the Learning Performance Network (LPN), a key education initiative of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). This study re-examines the claims about knowledge transfer made in a January 2009 evaluation of the RSC/LPN commissioned by the TDA and undertaken by the Centre for Educational Development Appraisal and Research (CEDAR), the University of Warwick (Neelands, Galloway and Lindsay, 2009)<sup>1</sup>.

The research reported here brings together a qualitative exploration of teacher and student experience, linked to an analysis of institutional practice and policy. It addresses the following questions:

1. What intellectual resources and repertoires of practice have been made available to key teachers through the Learning Performance Network?
2. How has this changed their practice with students?
3. How have key teachers worked with the LPN programme to spread these resources and practices to a cluster of neighbouring schools?
4. How have schools supported the work of LPN? What is the extent of their commitment, and how is this reflected in the resourcing of CPD through the allocation of time, money and integration into school strategy?

The report explores three overlapping fields. The first is that of the education work of the Royal Shakespeare Company. The second consists of the Postgraduate Certificate course accredited by Warwick University and delivered in partnership with the RSC. The third comprises the practices, mainly school-based, that represent the take-up and local adaptation of the RSC/Warwick offer.

The study found that the LPN programme offers significant intellectual and practical resources to schools and teachers. Without exception the key teachers in core schools significantly changed their teaching practices not only in relation to the teaching of Shakespeare but also in relation to work with other texts and in the use of dramatic processes per se. They gained significant confidence in editing. The Postgraduate Certificate did offer a systematic opportunity for teachers to reflect on their learning and how this was to be incorporated into classroom programmes.

The spread of learning and ensemble and rehearsal room practice was patchy across core schools; we observed a dilution effect across clusters. This is to be expected since the LPN must use existing school infrastructures, but we concluded on the basis of our research that it could take further measures to support the spread of cooperative activities within and between schools. The dilution effect was avoided in sites where there was also strong support for LPN

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<sup>1</sup> The report is publicly available on the Cultural Learning Alliance website. See <http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence>

activity outside the cluster from combinations of local authority, other cultural organisations and higher education. We concluded that the LPN model was both effective and scale-able to other arts forms and locations providing the appropriate strong partnerships exist between the arts organisation and higher education. We noted that the current commitment to teaching as a Masters level profession would support the upgrading of the academic component of LPN and that Creative Partnerships had generated the kinds of partnerships on which other programmes might be based. We therefore offered some suggestions for strengthening the programme: greater emphasis in workshops on interpretation; greater emphasis during selection on the support for middle level leadership change practices and on potential partnerships which would support sustained practice; a shift to practitioner research to underpin the academic components; an extension of the programme to Masters level and inclusion of more input about Shakespearian texts and about learning, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment.

## **B. Introduction**

In November 2009, Culture Creativity and Education (CCE) commissioned a research team from Nottingham, Goldsmiths and the Institute of Education to investigate the Learning Performance Network (LPN), a key education initiative of the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC). The LPN runs over three years, providing the opportunity for lead teachers to gain postgraduate certification accredited by the University of Warwick and for clusters of schools to work with the Education staff from the RSC. Since 2006 the programme has reached 400 schools located nationwide.

Creative Partnerships, a major CCE programme, invested in the LPN because of its potential to bring about significant change in the ways in which teachers introduced and worked with Shakespearean texts, a compulsory aspect of the English national curriculum. (Details of the funding for the LPN can be found in Appendix 1). Creative Partnerships' interests were not simply to evaluate how well the programme had performed in relation to changing teachers' practice but also to look at its wider implications. Accordingly, this research was specifically charged with examining what might be learnt about the processes of teacher professional development and about partnerships between the cultural sector, higher education and schools.

This study re-examines the claims about knowledge transfer made in a January 2009 evaluation of the RSC/LPN commissioned by the TDA and undertaken by the Centre for Educational Development Appraisal and Research (CEDAR), the University of Warwick. Through four case studies, the research provides an account of the impact on teachers' practice, and on school CPD provision, of the RSC/LPN. It also offers some commentary on the ways in which the programme might be strengthened, and some possibilities for scaling up the broad model exemplified by the LPN.

## **C. Research Design**

Our research, building on and adding to current explorations of continuing professional development (CPD), was designed to bring together a qualitative exploration of teacher and student experience, linked to an analysis of institutional practice and policy. It addressed the following questions:

1. What intellectual resources and repertoires of practice have been made available to key teachers through the LPN?
2. How has this changed their practice with students?

Establishing answers to these questions was essential to exploration of a further set of questions, related to the quality and sustainability of knowledge mediation between teachers accredited through the programme and their peers. Our overall interest was to ascertain whether the nature of the programme, (in this case engagement and association with a high prestige national arts company), has a relationship with how enthusiastically these resources are taken up by other teachers.

3. How have key teachers worked with the LPN to spread these resources and practices to a cluster of neighbouring schools?

4. How have schools supported the work of the LPN? What is the extent of their commitment, and how is this reflected in the integration into school strategy?

Through addressing these questions, we aimed to establish an illuminating account of the effects of relationships between teachers and creative practitioners, and teachers with their peers. Our hope was that the research would produce insights about the LPN model of professional development – with its emphasis on artist-teacher relationships and teacher-led knowledge building and mediation across clusters - that:

- Allowed a comparison with other forms of CPD practice, as reported e.g. in Cordingley (2007);
- Identified, thus, what might be specific to CPD practice involving cultural sector organisations;
- Gave an account of the conditions which sustain or work against the development of a CPD model based on knowledge transfer;
- Suggested approaches that can be developed further, outside the LPN network, to support an intellectually rich and pedagogically resourceful M Level programme of CPD.

#### **D. Methodology**

Using a mix of qualitative approaches, our methodology combined an interpretative approach to teacher experience and classroom interaction with an analytic interest in school systems and processes.

Four hub schools were selected that represented the time-scale of the RSC LPN, providing a picture of the development of the programme and its change and adaptation over time, as well as giving some idea of the difference between immediate enthusiasm and longer term effects. These schools also represent a range in the level of effective take-up of the RSC LPN offer. The selection provides some overlap with the hubs featured in the CEDAR report on the basis that these are considered successful examples of LPN practice and knowledge transfer.

In addition to the hub schools, we aimed to investigate four cluster schools associated with each hub, although that was not always possible, as two of the current clusters had developed and changed from their original composition and teachers originally involved were no longer available. Two of the hub schools were in the primary phase and two were secondary. In all, 32 teachers were interviewed as well as six groups of pupils, numbering 34 individuals covering key stages two, three and four. Two LA advisors involved in the development of clusters were also interviewed. Research visits to school included the following activities (see Table 1 for details):

- Interviews with accredited teachers and other teachers (Senior Leadership Team, i/c CPD, Drama and English) in both hub and cluster schools
- Interviews with students
- Observations of lessons based on the programme
- Observations of rehearsals for cluster performance
- Observations of cluster meeting
- Observations of planning meetings



- Observation of initial meeting with RSC
- Collection of documentary evidence for analysis; Ofsted reports, students' work, photographs of displays, planning notes, documentation from initial bid, video of preparation for performance, cluster meeting Powerpoint presentation.

In addition to school-based research, practitioner support was observed and videoed on a training weekend of the current cohort at Stratford-Upon-Avon, and at a current cohort hub school that was not part of the core, selected group. Training support materials and Action Research assignments that form the assessed element of the Postgraduate Certificate have been examined. Four RSC and Warwick personnel were also interviewed.

Other research activities included:

- Interviews with a supporting local theatre company
- Attendance at a Regional Schools Shakespeare Festival
- Attendance at a Regional Schools Shakespeare Celebration at Stratford
- Preliminary feedback of emergent findings with RSC and Warwick staff

This research differs from the original Warwick study in that it did not attempt to cover a representative sample of schools and teachers. Rather it sought to go 'deep' into a small number of schools where it was reported that the LPN programme was working successfully. It generated a diverse data set and relied heavily on researcher analysis and critical interpretation to bring the different accounts together. The purpose was to produce an optimal and optimistic account of the programme's operations. In our view, this form of research has much to offer practitioners and potential funders of arts-related CPD: a close-grained approach like this is necessary if the complexity and richness of an innovatory practice is to be appreciated, absorbed and adapted in other projects.

CLUSTER	Interviews complete	Documentation	Observations	Other data
<b>Midlands</b> Hub School	Lead teacher x2 HT Pupils Year 1	AR Report  Powerpoint presentation of Year 1 work  Examples written work	Observation of cluster meeting Observation of RSC Initial meeting with hub school	
Cluster	H of Eng (secondary 1) H of Drama (secondary 1) Eng teacher (secondary2) AH (Eng teacher, CPD, governor at hub school – secondary 2) Primary teacher and	Photographs of displays of students' work		Review/planning meeting (3 primary teachers)

	teaching assistant Pupils (6)Year 5			
<b>North</b> Wellingford Hub School	HT/lead teacher	AR Report		
Cluster	4 teacher interviews from 3 schools 2 HT interviews Pupils (5) Year 4	Examples written work	Year 4 literacy lesson 2 workshops Theatre in Education Company with Year 4	Interview Theatre in Education group Interview LA advisor Attended Regional Schools Shakespeare Festival
<b>South</b> Hub school	Lead teacher (H of Eng) H of Drama H of CPD Pupils (8) Year 7/8 Pupils (8) Year 9	AR Report	Year 9 Drama lesson	
Cluster	Teacher primary Teacher Secondary			
<b>South East</b> Cliffords Manor Hub	H of Drama H of Eng H of CPD Pupils (8) Year 9	2 AR reports		
Cluster	Teacher (primary) x3 Teacher special school		Rehearsal of The Tempest	Primary video of preparing for the cluster performance
RSC/Warwick	R1 R2 R3 W1 W2	7 AR Electronic Reports Titles of Reports '06 and '09 cohorts	RSC Inset at hub school outside of sample RSC Training weekend video	Shakespeare Toolkit INSET resources Attended Regional School Shakespeare Celebration

Table 1: Project data

## **E. How the LPN programme operates**

Each year the RSC advertises the opportunity for state-funded schools to join the LPN programme. Schools that apply must show commitment to changing the way in which they improve the teaching of Shakespeare, but must also demonstrate that they are part of a cluster of schools who will also participate in this endeavour. Clusters are selected on the basis of a range of criteria including the commitment of the two hub teachers to the PG Certificate, the financial commitment of the schools and the capacity of the hub school to lead the cluster. In addition, Free School Meals eligibility and identifiable school need is taken into account, together with a consideration of how the RSC might add value to the hub school and its partners. There are also geographical considerations to be made in order that the programme might achieve a national reach. In 2009, 10 clusters joined the LPN programme, a total of 77 schools. Using this as the measure it can be seen that at any one time, the LPN programme is working across at least 200 schools.

The LPN provides two key teachers in the hub school with an intensive three year involvement. In the first year participation in a Postgraduate Certificate from the University of Warwick includes five days of practical training, two intensive weekend workshops, plus in-school support. The key hub teachers are also supported in completing a 10,000 word reflective essay. At least twice in the first year key teachers from the cluster schools and other teachers in the hub school participate in school-based workshops offered by the RSC. Key hub school teachers might also offer support to their cluster school colleagues between and around INSET training.

In the second year, at the hub school, the RSC provides two training days for all key teachers in the clusters, creating a short ensemble performance of a scene from a Shakespeare play to be performed by their class. The emphasis in the second year is on working with young people. Students in the hub and cluster schools receive two intensive workshops and participate in regional performance showcases. Further training might be provided, as needed, for the cluster teachers by the lead teachers in the hub school. In addition to this, schools are encouraged to use existing networks of support such as LA advisors and local theatre groups.

The production-related aims of the first two years are common to all clusters, with a hub and cluster joint production at the end of the second year, which is sometimes held in one of the larger schools in the cluster, but usually at a local public venue. At the end of the second year, following a cluster's production of a Shakespeare play, one school is selected to spend one or two days at Stratford, with schools from the other participating clusters in the cohort. This culminates in a performance of their section of the play in a Regional Schools Celebration of Shakespeare to an audience at Stratford.

The third year of the programme has changed over time. Initially, in the third year the RSC formed a youth ensemble made up of two young people from each participating cluster in that cohort. The pupils, selected by the RSC, would come

together in Stratford to work with a director and voice practitioners over two and a half weeks to create a performance. The aim was that having had this immersion in working with Shakespeare, on return to their schools, these young people would work with the lead teachers in their cluster as ‘ambassadors’ for Shakespeare, acting as peer mentors, supporting the dissemination of ensemble and rehearsal room practices to children in the cluster who had not previously been involved. The Stratford experience also provided some training in this and the young people were set such task as taking a lead role in making an assembly production or producing a newsletter about their school or cluster’s Shakespeare work.

For the 2008 cohort, the third year of the programme changed, because while valuable for those young people selected for the Stratford experience, it offered only limited involvement to teachers and did not contribute to the sustainability of the project. Now the third year of the programme uses the £35,000 that was spent on the youth ensemble experience in Stratford to support a ‘development year’ during which the participating clusters decide on the direction this work might take over the next three years. The RSC supports the planning process and subsequently practical involvement might be commissioned from them, although not always, as the schools themselves decide on the deployment of funds. In some instances where the Local Authority is closely involved, advisors or in one case an associated local theatre company also work with the hub and cluster schools to support on-going development and the realisation of the plans for maintaining the teaching of Shakespeare in RSCLPN schools. (Table 2 gives details of the programme.)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 Current model
Key teachers in hub school	5 days training with RSC at Stratford  Participation in the Postgraduate Certificate in teaching Shakespeare  At least two days school- based training with cluster colleagues.	Training with cluster colleagues focused on creating a Shakespeare production	RSC supports planning process for teaching Shakespeare over the next three years and provides funding.  Might involve cluster schools directly or indirectly, local education networks, local authority or local theatre companies.
Students in key teachers class(es)	Experience Shakespeare lessons delivered through ensemble/rehearsal room pedagogy provided by their	Produce a section of a Shakespeare play with their teacher. Have two rehearsals taken by an RSC practitioner. Perform	Might be involved in locally planned developments in learning Shakespeare.

	teachers and a workshop session run by the RSC.	their section of play alongside cluster school pupils in a local venue.	
Students in hub school	Some might experience lessons on Shakespeare and other topics delivered through ensemble/rehearsal room pedagogy.		Might be involved in locally planned developments in learning Shakespeare.
Teachers in hub school	Participate in at least two RSC run school-based workshops.		
Teachers in cluster schools	Participate in at least two RSC run school-based workshops and might have further workshops delivered by hub school key teachers.	Training with hub and cluster colleagues focused on creating a Shakespeare production. Two visits by RSC practitioners to support the rehearsal process of their production.	Might be involved in planning three year vision with hub school.
Students in cluster schools	Some might experience lessons on Shakespeare and other topics delivered through ensemble/rehearsal room pedagogy.	Produce a section of a Shakespeare play with their teacher. Have two rehearsals taken by an RSC practitioner. Perform their section of play alongside cluster school pupils in a local venue.	Might be involved in locally planned developments in learning Shakespeare.
		One group of pupils from any school, cluster or hub perform their section of a Shakespeare play in a Regional School Shakespeare Celebration in Stratford.	

Table 2: LPN provision

## F. Intellectual resources and repertoires of practice

In the following section we explore the first of our research questions:

“What intellectual resources and repertoires of practice have been made available to key teachers through the LPN?”

Our material here focuses on two ‘generators’ of resources – the RSC, and Warwick University, each of which brings specific knowledge and skills to the LPN programme. The RSC offers a philosophy of ensemble and a pedagogy derived from rehearsal room practice.

‘Ensemble’, in the understanding of RSC leaders, is not a technical fix to problems of theatre-making. It reflects a social philosophy:

We’ve never had more cause to realise the grave importance of our interdependence as humans and yet we seem ever more incapable of acting on that realisation with the same urgency that we all still give to the pursuit of self interest. Theatre does have a very important role because it is such quintessentially collaborative art form. That gift of collaboration to the audience - and (potentially, yes) to the outside world - is a very precious one.

(Michael Boyd, quoted in Neelands, 2009: 189)

According to the RSC, a theatrical ensemble stands in contrast to a traditional hierarchical director-driven model. It is a site for learning; it holds that all members of a company have knowledge, skills and perspectives to offer and that these provide the basis for collaborative interrogation, interpretation and performance of text. An ensemble allows a ‘slow food’ approach to theatrical work (interview with member of RSC Education team 27/1/10); it requires long term membership, a commitment to making personal/professional life experiences the basis for group exploration, a preparedness to build trust and empathy, and a willingness to work intellectually, emotionally and physically. Ensembles are embodied, collective, democratic and creative.

The concept of ‘ensemble’ is key to the LPN, the development of whose activity required that the approach should be accepted by teachers and embedded in their work. It was, in the words of one of the Warwick participants, potentially ‘a brilliant bridging metaphor across educational drama and the theatre’ that had an immediate appeal to teachers, who could transfer the theatrical concept to their own work (Interview W1, 15/2/2010). ‘The ensemble,’ as one member of the RSC’s education team put it, ‘can describe a way of being in the world; a way that a classroom could be.’ (Interview R2, 27/01/10). ‘Ensemble’, with its emphasis on long-term, collaborative, open-ended practice also provided a model for the relationship of the RSC to schools. This was presented in the following terms:

The ensemble and the sense of longer term, invested, deeper, relationships drove our approach to creating a network with schools. We felt we needed to begin a three year partnership with them. We did a minimal bit of research on what is the length of time you need to work

with a set of schools in order for there to be any sense of change that could happen, and what we got back was that three years was the minimum length of time that we would need to work in partnership.

(Interview R3, member of RSC Education team 27/1/10).

This sense of the RSC's interest in long-term processes of educational change was underlined by others involved in the network, who suggested that the RSC 'are not just going in to improve the teaching of Shakespeare but to improve the quality of teaching and learning'. (Interview W1, 15/2/10.). It is evident from the published work of Warwick academics that they share the RSC's sense of the philosophical, and political, importance of 'ensemble' as a means of accomplishing a move from a 'pro-technical to a pro-social' stage in educational and cultural policy-making (Neelands 2009). The RSC's commitments and perceptions thus feed and enrich the long-standing interests of academics involved in drama/education.

As we suggested in our interim report, the commitment to 'ensemble' has underpinned a rigorous process of selecting hub schools, clusters and lead teachers that has developed over the life of the programme, which in turn appears to have significance for sustaining the project, particularly in its networked aspects, over time. Conversely, it has also served to stimulate the formal involvement of RSC company members in learning about pedagogy:

In the last two years, I think it's about thirty of the ensemble have done the postgraduate award with us. It's certified by Warwick and they do five days of tuition and then they are assessed on running workshops with young people. It has built the pool a bit for us but not hugely because of their commitments. But that has massively influenced the acting company because they are saying that education is not a mystery to them now and there is a massive dialogue between the rehearsal room and the department.

(Interview R2, 27/01/10)

We think it is a real source of strength that a common stock of meanings and purposes is shared across the team and is explicitly articulated by its members. We commented in our interim report that partners in the project had developed 'a common terminology...which appears to be important for building a sustainable learning community.' What we have encountered since confirms this view, and also suggests that generally the terminology has been quickly assimilated by participants in the LPN.

## G. Rehearsal room pedagogy

When applied to education, ensemble represents an ideal of a classroom practice, in which learners act as co-constructors of the meanings created through work on a Shakespeare text. Ensembles are built in and through the time/space of the rehearsal room.

The work of the rehearsal room involves facilitation and improvisation. It demands of participants a willingness to draw from their experience, and to commit themselves to an ongoing reflection on process and goals. The dramatic functioning of language is also highlighted, along with the ways in which language may be embodied in physical action. As is demonstrated by the RSC's *Toolkit for Teachers*, these emphases involve a disciplined closeness of attention, and a capacity to link overall thematic understandings to the detail of the plays. Attention to the reading of Shakespeare as a (provisional) act of interpretation is thus important, as is a sense of the multiple perspectives on action and character that are made available by the texts.

On this basis, it is possible to speak of a rehearsal room *pedagogy* - a regularised means of working towards a deepening understanding of the possibilities of text-based performance. A rehearsal room pedagogy requires the enactment of exercises designed to produce intellectual exploration, creative experiment and mutual understanding and respect: it is, in Neelands' term, 'pro-social'. It also has at its heart the interpretation of\_a text on which all those in the rehearsal room are expected to work, discuss, brainstorm, explore and try out/act out. One of the Warwick partners drew out the difference between this approach and that of other forms of drama learning: 'using much more text than you might expect in a process drama classroom; following the contours of the play much more closely than you would in a process drama classroom and blending more actual Rehearsal Room techniques in with other drama conventions' (W1 interview). Rehearsal room pedagogy, with its textual dimension, is thus, arguably, more demanding than are its analogues.

LPN's ambition is to align the pedagogies of the rehearsal room with those of the classroom:

Part of it is just in making very explicit parallels all the time between the collaborative investigations that happen in rehearsal rooms and the same thing that could be happening in the classroom. So you are making those explicit links all the time. Features of that rehearsal room pedagogy are: group working as an ensemble; having collective responsibility for the outcomes; improvising on your feet and being up and active and working practically. Those are the key things really fundamentally but we work really hard to make sure that the work that we do isn't just what we think will work in the classroom but reflects the [ongoing development of RSC thinking].

(Interview R2, 16/1/10)



Among those centrally involved in the LPN, there is a strong belief in the potential difference this approach can make to the organisation of teaching and learning in schools. The key terms in which such belief is expressed are those of radical pedagogy – ‘agency’, ‘authenticity’ and an educational experience that is relatively unmediated by the teacher’s input.

When I talk to the actors, what I’m really struck by is the word possibility: that the rehearsal room is a place of possibilities. And that’s the kind of sense I get when I talk to the teachers and they say that they see change in their pupils and a different way of them taking responsibility for their learning because - it’s about that agency, isn’t it? The responsibility is with the class to make the choices. And the way we set up an ensemble approach to learning is that it’s about your authentic connection with the text; your authentic connection with the interpretive choice as you see it. It’s that body/mind learning and those are the things that aren’t then taking place when we’re sitting and receiving; when we’re in that more traditional mode of what we think teaching and learning is, which is the teacher has all the knowledge and they tell you it. So how can we create a learning environment where that exchange isn’t taking place, but instead what we’re creating is a desire to learn? And we’re also acknowledging that the children’s relationship with the text is the important thing - without me having to be the intermediary in making sense of it. If they can have a direct relationship with that text, they will make direct discoveries about it which are much more fundamental and much more meaningful than anything that I can tell them about it. They can experience it for themselves. (Interview R3, 27/1/10)

This emphasis on directness of individual experience is matched by a concern to create learning communities:

I think, when it’s working well, this project makes teachers feel like they aren’t teachers in that old school sort of way. And I think that what it does is it goes towards making them genuinely committed to reflection. Firstly, the programme makes a good community practice in the whole school. And where it is working at its best, it makes a genuine community practice between the cluster of schools ... for the short space in which the rehearsals and the performances take place, because everybody is engaged with it and everybody has that hugely important shared experience. (Interview R2, 27/1/10)

The intentions set out here are ambitious. We observed sessions with the 2009 cohort of the Postgraduate Certificate, led by RSC Education facilitators, which tended to suggest that these intentions are, at least in part, communicated to and shared with teachers. The pedagogy we observed was fast-paced, involving and demanding, connecting textual interpretation with cultural experience, and seeking workable ways of organising classroom learning. There was an explicit emphasis on the creation of ensemble, and a search for meaningful ways of realising the concept in action – as this extract from our field notes suggests:

(M, R, A and V are RSC facilitators.)

M asks for 4 volunteers, 2 for each A, they have to wrestle the As back

M: this idea of pushing and pulling away... Makes a resistance that gives us a need to speak ... force of argument... push and pull... physical contact... the need to speak... brave and scared at the same time, in love and scared that we aren't... discover in the body that we can link with the argument ...

V: Always working inside a dynamic... equal and opposite force

R: Most important is to hear how you [actors] feel

A: Obviously we can't use it in the scene... feel things in rehearsal that will settle in your body... rely on things you don't have to think about

Teacher observes that speech seems to flow faster in this exercise.

M: Humans are complex... danger in concentrating on one thing... oppositions

V: Acting is a process... do you do something that helps you, taken from rehearsal onto the stage?

A: It makes it very live, making it live and riffing off each other, pulling up on someone else's performance and keeping it quality

V: So that's *ensemble*?

A: Simple ball games, keeping the ball up... deal simple... make it easy for other person and not be clever... something will happen to keep the ball in the air

M: We create together... for other companies, it's a day job. (20/3/10)

In later sections, we discuss the ways in which the rich educational offer made by ideas of ensemble and rehearsal room pedagogy is received and translated at the level of the school and the classroom, thus exploring the second of our research questions: how has the LPN offer contributed to change in teachers' practice? Before this, however, we will discuss the intellectual resources provided by Warwick University.

## H. The Postgraduate Certificate

The RSC/Warwick University course offers:

- A focus on **action research**

The Postgraduate Certificate is geared to support teachers in investigating in a systematic way the approaches they are trying in their classes. Action research requires a question to be posed, and one or more cycles of investigation interspersed with explicit periods of critical reflection.

- The discipline of a **formal course of study**

Action research is both public and documented. When applied to schools, its goal is to build professional expertise and knowledge which can be shared more widely within and beyond the school community. The sequence of assignments required in the Postgraduate Certificate is geared to providing the necessary scaffolding for reflective documentation.

Warwick and RSC staff work on the programmes together and see their strengths as overlapping and complementary.

It would not work if you did your Friday and Saturday with the RSC and then Sunday morning somebody came in to give you a research methods thing. Whatever the model going forward, it would need to be based on a high degree of integration between the people doing the research method and the people doing the training because, after all, that's what teachers are taking back and reporting on. So the research method trains them to understand what it is that they are doing and the kind of obstacles they face. (W2 interview, 19/3/10)

They've brought their drama and education practice very squarely to the table; the RSC brought rehearsal room approaches and their whole sort of pedagogy of working with a rehearsal room narrative very squarely to the table. The two things totally make sense together and I think one of the big things is that there is mutual benefit for everybody. (R3, 27/01/10)

Our research set out to investigate what this joint programme afforded to teachers and schools.

## **I. Findings from the research**

Productive school change depends in large part upon renewing the professional capacities of teachers. Central here is the capacity of educational agencies and institutions to develop systems that can initiate and sustain such renewal, not only on the part of individual teachers, but also within and across schools (GTCE/NCSL 2005).

Questions of knowledge production and knowledge transfer – the latter perhaps better understood as the remaking of knowledge in local contexts, rather than the passing on of a particular body of skills and information – are thus important features of renewal. Such a project, according to an extensive review of research literature, is most effective when it combines input from outside experts with local peer support, when it involves both experimentation and collaboration between teachers, and when it connects directly to the teachers' own classroom (Cordingley et al, 2003). Our own work on Creative Partnerships and school change has also highlighted issues of leadership, of modalities of change and of organisational commitment, and the ways in which these shape CPD more or less productively (Thomson, Jones and Hall 2009).

The involvement of arts organisations in aspects of school change is now well evidenced (Adams et al 2008; and, for drama, Fleming et al, 2004; Turner et al, 2004; Ellis, 2005; Safford & Barrs, 2005; Brice Heath and Wolf, 2005). It may well form an increasingly prominent part of the landscape of educational reform. Likewise, the work of individual arts and creative practitioners has been productively, and critically, studied (Galton, 2008). This research brings something different to the CPD debate. Existing research on drama, creativity and classroom practice, tends – albeit not exclusively - to focus on student experience. In extending the CEDAR research, the new emphasis of this study adds significantly to knowledge about the effect of 'cultural sector' practice on schools, notably through exploration of systemic issues of knowledge transfer across schools, and through addressing specifically issues of CPD impact arising from the work of creative practitioners in the context of new policy initiatives.

Our findings suggest changes at the level of individual teachers, schools and clusters.

### **Individual teachers**

Our data support the view that involvement in the LPN has a significant effect on the ways in which teachers approach the teaching of Shakespeare, and in some cases, other texts. The nature of these changes is best exemplified in the Case Studies below. The changes occurred because there are substantive intellectual resources and enhanced repertoires of practice made available to the lead teachers through the programme. In part, these take the form of printed materials and talk made available to teachers through regular access to RSC staff to discuss possibilities and opportunities. But they are also made available through participation in RSC led workshops, which offer an opportunity to experience first-hand what ensemble 'feels' like. In some instances, this

experience is one which provides teachers with opportunities to see themselves, and their work, differently.

Similar changes in practice were reported by and about teachers in a range of hub schools. Our data suggest that a key to this change was the way in which the LPN supported teachers to develop pedagogies that encourage close reading of segments of text. This was closely aligned with the ways in which LPN staff and activities supported teacher engagement with text through editing. However, there was variable success in spreading this change in identity and professional practice more widely.

### **The focus on interpretation**

The training for lead practitioners focused significantly on building interpretations of particular texts. In the March 2010 session at Stratford, for example, engagement with *Romeo and Juliet* began early in the day with rhythmic chanting ('Romeo's dead, Juliet's dead, Romeo, Juliet, they are both dead!'); work on stage directions ('enter Tybalt brandishing a sword'); songs about Verona, and tableaux about love at first sight, forbidden love and gang fighting. Groups worked on how *Romeo and Juliet* might be understood within a frame of thinking about children's games that come to be adults' games. When the groups had generated a range of ideas on this theme, the workshop leader stepped back and pointed out that the teachers needed to work in a similar way with their own students, taking responsibility for suggesting ideas, making connections and helping groups develop their collective interpretations of the plays they were working on.

The teachers clearly enjoyed building these interpretations together in the workshop session, and the next day, after they had seen the RSC production at The Courtyard Theatre, they were interested in discussing the interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet* the company had developed. This chance to unpick and reflect on different interpretations was particularly exciting for the teachers who were least familiar with watching or studying Shakespeare. The following field note suggests the intellectual attraction of this activity to teachers who had not previously thought about the text in this way.

[Evelyn and Sheila], the teacher and Nursery nurse from X, tell me about their growing enjoyment of Shakespeare. Evelyn says she didn't like Shakespeare before; she hadn't seen a Shakespeare production before; she had only ever studied Shakespeare for O level at school. The July training had involved seeing *As You Like It*. Evelyn felt she wouldn't understand it but the day's work had prepared her, and she had really enjoyed the play. The next day the group had discussed their interpretations of the production. She hadn't said anything but she had 'sat there going oh yes, oh yes, oh yes!' as ideas were discussed. That had made her want to see the play again. She had suggested going to her husband but he didn't want to. She suggested he should go for a walk while she watched it, and they should have a day out in Stratford, but her husband hadn't been keen. Then Sheila had said she would be willing to go with her, so they both went to *As You Like It*, Evelyn for the second

time. They had enjoyed talking about the play and Evelyn felt she was really learning about what it was about.

(Field note, March 2010)

The workshop training set out to model how the teachers might work with their own students, with workshop leaders also providing an explicit commentary on what they were doing in order to support reflection on pedagogy and to make connections to themes and ideas that were of significance to the group.

At school level, as the teachers worked with their students, it was difficult to see a similar emphasis on developing interpretation. There was a lot of emphasis on understanding plot. The 'whoosh', particularly, was widely appreciated and used as a technique for summarising and recapping on narrative. Other techniques, particularly the use of tableaux, were widely used to probe the emotional context of different moments or scenes. But work that focused on making more patterned connections to particular themes, motifs, issues or points of view – connections that might highlight for viewers and participants ways in which the play could be interpreted in relation to the concerns of their own lives – was less in evidence.

Case Study 3 from Wilberforce Primary School illustrates this tendency to avoid grappling with the big ideas of the plays and the ways in which they might connect with students' own lives and experiences. Lucy's concerns were with explication of the plot and finding techniques which would provide a polished and confident re-telling of the tale using the performance space to best effect. She accepted the brief given to her by the lead practitioner in the hub school; she was busy and focused on completing the task to a high standard. She did not engage with discussions about the overall interpretation of the play, or even the initial choice of which play should be studied. She was curious to see work from the other schools in the cluster, and frustrated that this had not been arranged for her or her pupils, but her curiosity related more to the relative standard of their performances and the fairness or otherwise of the judges' decisions than to an interest in their interpretations of *Pericles*. Her assumptions about continuity seemed to rely exclusively on plot, rather than the development of ideas or themes or ways of reading the play from different perspectives and through different lenses.

This was in contrast to the way the Wellingford cluster (Case Study 4) had worked with *The Winter's Tale*. The cluster began with a series of teachers' meetings to explore the play.

Well, in that first autumn term we were working on it but it was with the teachers: it was having Insets and having meetings with the teachers who were going to be then doing it with their children. We didn't start it with the children until after Christmas and, at that point, we introduced it to the children in each of the hub schools because it wasn't just schools in the cluster but some from [Wellingford] as well which were outside the cluster.

Initial work with the children ran in parallel with these meetings and focused, as it had done at Wilberforce, on building familiarity with the plot:

We did it literally as a story but a kind of acted-out story.

The teaching concentrated on encouraging active re-tellings of the story:

They were able to piece that plot back together and retell it back to me and then we did it again and they were very fluent with it and they could actually recount the story. So, after that, we brought in another class and it was their remit that they had got to retell the story to the other class, and it was a collaborative retelling because each person in the class was a different character. So that was powerful. And it was that language, and children being able to speak it, and tell it, and sequence it before they can actually write it down themselves. And that did work really well. So my class were able to communicate that story to Chris's class, who were the younger ones. And the fact that it was children telling other children the story was something that stimulated the younger ones because they realised that they could do that as well. So by telling the story to one class, and the kind of performance that they did, it brought the younger class onboard as well.

The teachers considered it important that the children knew the play as a whole, 'rather than just doing a little bit of it and then trying to patchwork it together.' Following the retelling of the story, the cluster teachers in the cluster analysed the children's engagement with the text and their particular interests and points of connection to it:

And then we had a number of cluster meetings where the teachers came together from the different schools that were running it with their class in order to talk things over and which aspects, in particular, their children were interested in looking at and developing. And we negotiated all that.

This work led them to propose a particular interpretation of *The Winter's Tale* that highlighted the experience of Mamillius, the 'gallant child', son of King Leontes and Queen Hermione, who appears only in the first two acts of the play and dies off-stage.

He's the young son of Leontes and he dies fairly early on in the play, probably because of being neglected. Because his mum's in prison and his dad's crazy, and everyone kind of forgets about him, and he actually dies. And somebody rushes into the trial scene and says that Mamillius is dead and everything just falls apart. He doesn't actually appear in the play very much, but we decided to use Mamillius to be the link between all of the scenes. We kind of thought how would Mamillius, who was just a nine year old boy and who was the real victim of this piece - because at the end there is a reconciliation and it looks as if Leontes and Hermione are going to be back together and everything is hunky-dory - but we wanted it to end with a question mark. So is it hunky-dory? Well, yes, Perdita's back but what about - how can you forgive people for what's happened? What about Mamillius? How can that be reconciled?

Mamillius was used in the cluster's production 'to link the different scenes together...so, from an audience's point of view, it would make sense', but also to connect to the children's experiences:

We just kept bringing Mamillius back into it and he would kind of comment on it. But the children really took to Mamillius and I'm sure they now all think that he's the main character in *The Winter's Tale* because they really identified with him: they're Year 5 and we reckoned that he's a nine or ten year old boy and they could really see things from his point of view. And when there is this major bust-up in the family and there's a rift, and there have been some rifts in many families in that classroom as well. So they could really see things from his point of view and feel how powerless he must be feeling and how powerless he must have felt when his mother was dragged away and thrown in prison. His dad has no time for him and he's acting very strangely and he's rejected him. And he is neglected and nobody wants to hear his point of view and so the children just feel for him.

The suggestion to think about the plot from Mamillius's point of view came originally from a teacher, but the interpretative work was done by the class:

Well I, initially, said that I think we could look at this but I didn't think it was going to take the focus that it did. Because he was real to them: he was this ten year old boy and they knew which team he supported; they knew what his hobbies and interests were and they could totally empathise with him. So because I wanted it to be an organic thing we let it go in that direction and we let them explore Mamillius's character.

In Wellingford, then, at this point in the life of the LPN, the work was to interpret the plays and, through performance, make them accessible for a local audience. Links were made to the fundamentals of literacy education across the Local Authority. The emphasis was on collaboration and the use of available teacher networks, rather than on individual teacher responsibility or competition between schools. Ongoing affiliation to the work of the RSC was very strong amongst the teachers.

### **Weaker connections**

The work in Wellingford was qualitatively different to the work done in the Cliffords Manor cluster that included Wilberforce Primary, where the LPN involvement was characterised, by Lucy at least, as a project. The competitive dimension gave this project drive and focus but also led to loss of commitment to the group enterprise and negativity when the school did not 'win' a place at the Regional School Shakespeare Celebration at Stratford.<sup>2</sup> The teacher learning from the project concerned transferable teaching skills, and there was a high dependence on the RSC INSET resources for remembering the drama games and

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that although the RSC does not promote the competitive element of the Regional Schools Shakespeare Festivals, that is the platform for the selection of a school to the Regional Schools Shakespeare Celebration, and as such the Festivals are interpreted as competitions by some clusters and schools.



techniques. The focus was on the individual teacher and, despite very successful in-service training encounters, the ongoing link to the RSC was weak. The focus for the children was on 'becoming good at drama' and this seemed linked, though less overtly, to the school improvement and attainment agendas

A similar focus on school improvement and becoming good at drama was evident in the wider group of teachers as they gave accounts of their action research projects in a peer review session. For some of these teachers, developing understanding of Shakespeare's plays was low on their pedagogic agendas. The following field note records one teachers' presentation on how engagement with the LPN had affected her teaching:

She taught a lesson on creating impressions through sound, looking at the level of the language. She speaks of 'doing a whoosh'. She thinks it's important to focus on what the teacher is trying to achieve by the end of the lesson. For example, do they really need to know the play? She thinks not and so she does only small chunks of a play, never the whole script. 'Do I want her to be an actress? No! Do I need her to know the play? No! What I want to do is to teach them words and help them with their literacy.'

In the discussion following this presentation, another teacher spoke of Shakespeare as 'a great leveller, because no one can really understand him.' The feeling that Shakespeare was ultimately incomprehensible was often accompanied by a strong emotional response to students' work and their own success in engaging the students in the Shakespeare activities.

'I have to admit when I did this presentation to the head teacher I had a tear in my eye. It was the most embarrassed I've ever been.' (Field note, March 2010)

These teachers were moved by the sense that something difficult was being conquered, something boring was being made interesting. These feelings did not necessarily encourage them to emphasise meaning-making and interpretation in their lessons with young people.

Other teachers in the group, most obviously those who were preparing classes for written examinations on Shakespeare texts, noted the success of the pedagogic techniques they were now using and commented on their students' enjoyment of the lessons, but noted the difficulty of pushing students to move beyond description of the exploratory pedagogic techniques to interpretation of the play itself.

They discussed the problem of some students who will write verbatim about the technique used to explore the play, rather than integrating ideas from the exploration into their own analysis. (Field note, March 2010)

For the lead practitioners who worked directly with the RSC in a relationship that was sustained over a period of time, there were opportunities to develop understanding about interpreting the plays. As well as engaging in the workshop activities, the lead practitioners had the chance to see RSC productions and to

discuss them afterwards in the group and with members of the cast. The Case Study of Evelyn offers an illustration of the ways in which these processes supported individual teachers in developing a sense that Shakespeare's plays have some relevance to their own and their students' lives. Evelyn's increased confidence in seeking connections and making meanings from the texts was typical of the experience of some of the LPN group. The Wellingford work on *The Winter's Tale* exemplifies this confidence at the level of the cluster of schools; they used the techniques they had learned to familiarise pupils with the plot, then moved on to using the resources of the group – and the spirit of ensemble – to develop an interpretation of the play which arose from their own concerns and spoke directly to their audiences.

These observations lead us to suggest that there is a 'dilution' effect in the LPN as the work ripples out from the central RSC experience. In addition to the undoubted expertise and craft knowledge amongst the trainers, there are a range of other factors which make the lead practitioner INSET particularly powerful: it is residential; it involves commitment to the group; there is a chance to see and discuss a high quality production of the play the group are working on. Above all, it exposes teachers to the work of a company who believe that Shakespeare's plays have contemporary relevance and meaning.

As the circles get more distant from the RSC centre, the belief in the relevance and value of Shakespeare is diluted. Many of the teachers have had negative experiences of Shakespeare and they often lack the confidence that accompanies strong subject knowledge or previous lesson successes. They accept Shakespeare's standing in the canon and want to make a good job of teaching a mandatory and highly visible part of the curriculum. Improving students' knowledge of the plots, their performance skills, their facility in articulating Shakespearean language and their enjoyment of lessons constitute marked progress. The work of developing their own readings of the plays and organising ideas to create particular interpretations is a step further.

The teachers' response to the idea of editing the plays is relevant to these points.

### **Editing Shakespeare**

The teachers were encouraged in the training sessions to edit the texts their classes used and to offer their students scripts which could be annotated and individualised. They were, on the whole, hugely relieved at the idea of not having to plough through the plays from Act I to Act V decoding the language with the help of the notes. They liked the idea of editing the text to make it shorter; it made the teaching project 'more plausible', as Lucy put it. But, other than in the Mamillius example given above, the teachers did not tend to see the editing work as fundamental to creating an interpretation of the play; it was more about filleting or offering a précis, a skill to be taught and practised.

We've had training on editing the script and ensemble training as well. So it's been quite hard but quite enjoyable and I have to say that I haven't really had a big involvement in Shakespeare and I've never edited a text

before either so it's all been quite new to me. So the training with the children has been quite useful to me as well because I've seen how theatrical people would go about teaching drama skills such as voice projection and choral work and movement and it's been really useful. (Teacher, Wellingford cluster)

In Wellingford, the strategy for sustaining the LPN work after the success of *The Winter's Tale* was to employ a local Theatre in Education (TIE) company to facilitate the work and organise the festival. The teachers who were new to the LPN felt their allegiance to the TIE company rather than the RSC:

... it's very much [the Theatre in Education company] that is really driving it forwards. RSC has a big involvement and they did the training and I think they've had a big influence on [the TIE company] but, from the school's point of view, we have a lot of links with [the TIE company] and they're the people who organise our hub meetings and they're the people who give us the advice and they provide us with tutors who come in and do work with us on movement and ensemble work. (Teacher, Wellingford cluster)

In fact, the TIE practitioners had not worked closely with the RSC: although they had been invited, they had not attended any of the four RSC training days and worries were beginning to emerge about whether

some of these teachers felt a bit confused as to what was going on. At worst, we may have produced a situation whereby kids are just being directed to do things without really understanding it. We hope we haven't, but I think if there's error it would have been... that we didn't triangulate those discussions with the RSC, [the TIE company] and ourselves early enough or long enough. (Local Authority advisor)

The Local Authority advisor, whilst being highly supportive of the company, was concerned that

I should have negotiated it more carefully around a whole range of things really such as coherence for teachers, CPD for teachers, developing those editing and directional skills in our teachers for that year. And, against that, the urgency of ensuring that the children get a really good experience with a good drama set up.

The TIE company's approach did seem to differ from the RSC's. They understood that the Local Authority had 'outputs to hit on Shakespeare and literacy'; they began their workshops with active work on the play to ensure that 'when it comes to the text, they understand it completely.' They believed that 'teachers have been taught not to be creative'; that creativity 'in the last ten years, has been thrashed basically' and that as a TIE company, they were 'a lot more creative and a lot more imaginative and daring'. Because their focus was on developing participants' creativity, they found it easier to work with primary schools:

I think people have assumed it would be more difficult to do Shakespeare in primary schools but I think because the kids are developing language

and because their imaginations haven't begun to close off yet, because I think that is what happens to most people. So I think approaching it in primary school is a much easier job than approaching it in secondary schools, because they have a barrier and they have creative limits and they shut down and they think it's going to be complex and confusing because that's what they expect Shakespeare to be, because it's not always taught in an active way. But I think primary children are always very susceptible and have creativity in any story and I just think it's much easier teaching primary children.

Their broad aims related to empowering both teachers and children through their own example. From their perspective,

In this particular project the aim is to up-skill teachers not just for teaching Shakespeare but across the curriculum. So that's why they should be in with us while we are working with their children and it's important that they work alongside us while we show them these skills. And, for the children, the aim is to promote literacy and inspire them to be a bit more involved with books and they can take it home and work with their parents.

And a few contacts that I work on are schools where I will work on something for a morning and then leave things for teachers to do. Whether that is creative written work or whether that is an activity that they can extend and have a go at themselves and see how it works. So I will always leave something.

The collaborative hub and cluster organisation was problematic

because there are a lot of schools and there are a lot of hubs and, basically, we hope that, in years to come, they won't need us as a company and that they will be able to set it up for themselves.

The project as it was understood and promoted by the company, with its strong focus on infectious creativity supplied to schools by the creative practitioners, was not entirely coherent either with aims of the RSC or the LPN locally.

### **Studying Shakespeare: the Postgraduate Certificate**

An integral part of the LPN programme is the formal qualification - the Postgraduate Certificate. The LPN offers two key teachers from each school the opportunity to undertake an action research project and to write a dissertation reporting on what they did. The teaching of research is integrated into the weekend workshops. Both the Warwick and RSC staff take responsibility for this aspect of the programme. A Warwick staff member reported that the 'theatre/drama' component of the programme was 70% RSC and 30% Warwick, while the research component was the reverse. This shared teaching mode was often not recognised by participants who saw the theatre as the purview of the

RSC with Warwick being responsible for the Postgraduate Certificate. One teacher however did see the programme as being very cooperative.

The help for the guidance on writing was actually done at Warwick but other than that there was very little difference ... they were just at different venues and one weekend we were at Stratford and the next we were at Warwick.

Higher education practitioners agree that it can be a challenging task to encourage teachers to think critically not only about their practice, their assumptions and values but also to evaluate critically commonly used and officially approved pedagogical approaches. Moving from simply thinking 'what works?' to ask 'why?' and 'how might this be different?' can be a challenge. It is also not easy for busy teachers to find the time and space to write regular reflective journals and to engage in scholarly reading. It would thus not be unexpected if some teachers found the more formal aspects of the Postgraduate Certificate work somewhat difficult. These kinds of perception were anticipated by the programme designers and they developed a relatively simple format for both generating the research question and for writing the assignment.

However, our data suggests that, although work on the PG Certificate clearly afforded ongoing opportunities for them to reflect on their practice, teachers were generally not quite as enthusiastic about the formal academic requirements as they were about the other aspects of the programme. It was more like a valuable medicine, than something to be enjoyed.

We did quite a lot of active stuff and we had instructions in postgraduate study and all the rules and regulations for referencing and all that kind of thing but we had lots of active stuff.

Teachers did appreciate being given clear guidelines about what to do in order to pass.

We were given guidance and instructions on some of the things we definitely shouldn't be doing. I may not be painting the fairest picture and it may be my memory because that wouldn't have been the most exciting part for me and I don't mean that in any way rudely. So I would have listened to what I had to do and then got on with it. But I loved the active part.

They also appreciated the support they got in between formal sessions.

I think that to take on doing a postgraduate certificate, in whatever capacity, involves a lot of work. The amount of support that we had from the tutors at Warwick was fundamental in how we were able to cope with the project. The way in which the research part of the project was structured and how it was introduced to us and the availability and the possibility of being able to contact them by email and get feedback....

One commented very positively on the discipline of the reflective journal.

(It was about) being organised and allowing yourself a set amount of time each week to be able to devote to your research. The in-classroom element – the journal – was really not an onerous task. I think that, probably, was at the heart of the research but I didn't find that difficult at all. To begin with I had to think about the process of becoming a reflective thinker again because it's very easy to finish a lesson and then walk away and think that went well or that went badly but we don't allow ourselves, as teachers, enough time to be able to think about things. You just get on with the job day to day because there are so many pressures; there are so many extra things that you have to do, planning lessons and dealing with all the paperwork, so it's very easy to forget that the greatest rewards can come from just sitting for about ten minutes thinking about things. And that's what that journal made me do.

Also, there was often a sense of achievement when the formal academic requirements were completed. One teacher described her dissertation as a real accomplishment.

I really, really enjoyed it in the kind of way of banging your head against a wall and I was very proud of it when I'd done it and I was pleased with the work that I'd accomplished and I found it interesting doing it but it was a lot of work whilst I was teaching. But I did get a real sense of accomplishment and I was very delighted when it was used and some of it is on the website.

Nevertheless, a number of teachers seemed to think that the formal academic requirements were something that they might not necessarily take up if they were given the option. And some teachers just didn't find the time to stay the distance.

If I'd completed the research project, I would have got the PG Cert but I chose to opt out of that simply due to time pressure.

We were interested to note that the headteachers all saw the Postgraduate Certificate as being very important as it was a sign that the professional development on offer was sustained, systematic and, in their eyes, of high quality.

The LPN aspires to promote deep thinking and deep change. There was certainly evidence of both action and reflection in the dissertations that were available to us. However, we also noted that there was a strong tendency for them to adhere to a 'what works' approach and to use standard measures as evidence of change. This is hardly surprising given that this is the dominant discourse in schools. To do otherwise would be to work against the restricted assessment repertoires that remain dominant practice, despite official endorsement of 'assessment for learning'. The LPN approach works with and through practices in schools that have little choice but to focus on short term gains and easily identifiable learning outcomes.

We suggest that more might be done in the formal academic parts of the programme in order to assist teachers to move beyond the surface of quick change and into more reflexive territory.

## **J. Possibilities for strengthening the LPN**

We have noted already that the programme promoted the use of editing and was less effective in working on questions of interpretation. We have also suggested that at least some of the teachers involved did not appear to have engaged as fully as they might with critical interrogations of their practice nor with alternative ways of assessing students' learning. We also focused on the 'dilution effect' and the difficulties for classroom teachers to lead and sustain change without know-how and considerable internal and external support.

We do however think that some of these difficulties might be overcome by thinking differently about the academic components on offer in the Postgraduate Certificate. We suggest that there is some mileage in considering:

- Changing the basis of the inquiry project from action research to the broader field of practitioner inquiry.

Action inquiry is a specific mode of research which requires teachers to research the changes they are making in their practice. Although there are multiple versions of action research, in essence it requires teachers to identify a problem, and then to enact a cycle of reconnaissance, formulation of a question and then an action that they can both reflect on and generate evidence about the effects. Practitioner research is a broader notion and places more emphasis on the teacher thinking through what it means to do 'insider research'; this not only opens up the question of taken for granted assumptions but also of what kind of evidence is required in order to find out what has happened as a result of the new strategies being tried. Documentation in practitioner research is generally more closely tied to the kinds of portfolio documentation that teachers routinely do, rather than work as an add-on. Our experience in working with teachers suggests that practitioner research is less likely to be tied to the 'what works' discourse and more supportive of the notion of the 'researching professional'.

- Adding a formal component which looks at the interpretation of Shakespearian texts

We understand the goal of the LPN to make teachers practised and confident interpreters and editors of Shakespearian texts. Our data suggests that teachers gain confidence in the idea of editing texts, but not necessarily in a manner that develops local interpretations. Interpretation by ensemble relies on the existence of at least some group members with detailed knowledge about the practices of interpretation - some disciplinary knowledge, as well as the skills to construct activities that allow students to acquire it. We suggest that more formal input about the process of textual interpretation may be helpful for at least some of the teachers who have had little exposure to this practice in their formal teacher education. Systematic exposure to discussions about Shakespeare and his context as well as debates about contemporary interpretations



does already exist in another Warwick Masters course; at present, the LPN has no formal connections with this separate award.

- Extending the work on learning to encompass a greater range of materials, including those focused on theorising pedagogy, and developing new approaches to assessment.

Our data suggest that lead teachers were very willing to take up the idea of ensemble as supporting an improved, collaborative, open-ended practice at the classroom level. It was less clear that lead teachers had a commitment to this as a philosophy and set of practices in the longer term and this was even more diffuse among other staff, where LPN was often seen as a time-limited 'project'.

The LPN seeks to pay attention to the reading of Shakespeare as a (provisional) act of interpretation, to imbue a sense of the multiple perspectives on action and character that are made available by the texts, and to highlight the dramatic functioning of language, and the ways in which language may be embodied in physical action. In these contexts, it is possible to speak of a rehearsal room *pedagogy* - a regularised means of working towards a deepening understanding of the possibilities of text-based performance. Early childhood teachers are more likely, as our case study of Evelyn suggests, to understand that rehearsal room pedagogy is another form of the active, experiential and exploratory pedagogies espoused officially for the early years. Primary and secondary teachers on the other hand may well need more assistance to see how rehearsal room relates to social constructivist approaches to learning, to the applied integration of curriculum, assessment and method (what is often known in Europe as didactics), and to approaches which support the use of local, family and popular 'funds of knowledge'. Teachers also need support to identify the generic skills derived from artistic practice – such as perseverance, or a problem-solving approach – that are integral to rehearsal room. We see that there is a need for more structured interrogation of theories of teaching/learning which would allow teachers to see how it is that they can embed and spread rehearsal room in their more general teaching repertoire. This would encompass formal debate about the ways in which an encounter is staged between the formative principles of a field of arts practice and the pedagogical principles that underpin classroom work.

- Offering teachers access to training in leading change.  
There is now widespread interest across the education system in England and abroad in 'distributed leadership'. This is an approach which recognises that school change depends on teachers having the capacity to have and share ideas, perspectives, and reflections and, with colleagues, bring them to the ongoing processes of teaching/learning. It is also generally recognised that while some teachers acquire leadership skills through exposure to designated leaders, there is a richer and more general benefit if there is a systematic access to and interrogation of relevant intellectual resources about change practices. The NCSL's *Leading from the Middle* programme is one example of a programme which addresses this need.

The LPN aspires to have lead teachers move, over time, from innovation in their classrooms to support for a small group of like-minded colleagues, to the school and then a cluster. This is a tall order and one which certainly needs more discussion of process in our view. In the first instance, it speaks to the process of selection for inclusion in the LPN programme, and it would be helpful, we think, to not only ask lead schools what arrangements are in place to train teachers to become middle change leaders but also to require them to offer tangible support. It further speaks to the development of the formal academic programme which could be extended to encompass structured discussion of middle leadership.

The Postgraduate Certificate as constituted clearly cannot do all of the things. It may seem paradoxical that we suggest an expansion of the academic programme when we have also reported data which suggests that some teachers are less than enthusiastic about the academic offer. We do not see that as contradictory. Rather we think that, by both stepping up the intellectual challenge and input, and changing the inquiry programme to more closely resemble the routine ways in which teachers already document their practice, teachers may see and experience 'the point' of it rather differently. This may mean, changing the notion of the Postgraduate Certificate so that it no longer operates as a stand-alone but rather as the first part of another Masters level programme – in which case, issues of compatibility with a range of Masters programmes and transferability of credits might be taken into consideration. It may also mean broadening the artefact used for Postgraduate Certificate assessment so that it is less essay-like, and more open to other media and genres which can support the work of middle leadership - for example documentation that could be used as part of professional development activities, or curriculum materials that might become part of the regular timetabled activities used each year.

## K Towards Sustainability

Our overall evaluation of the LPN is strongly positive. It has dealt successfully with the pressure of accountability driven, narrowly defined, assessment objectives and developed a creative space for engaging work. It has brought rich intellectual resources to the rethinking of educational practice, and has provided teachers with 'pedagogical means' that, plainly, they find valuable. This value was of several kinds. At one level, it focused on pedagogic technique - 'lots of ideas for stuff'; 'I have now got a bank of techniques'. At another, it was expressed in heads' appreciation that the RSC's resources provided opportunities to raise the profile of their school and its children, whom they saw as unjustly disparaged. At another still, it stemmed from an engagement with the artistic, as well as the social, possibilities of the programme.

Against this *diverse* evaluative background we summarise now what seem to us to be some of the main problems encountered by the LPN and suggest how these might be resolved and a sustainable basis created for its further development.

The hub and cluster model is vital for achieving the diffusion of the RSC offer beyond a few schools. It suffers, however, from problems of unevenness. In some areas, there was an imbalance in power between hub and cluster schools, with decisions about resources, focus and process taken at the hub and transmitted 'vertically' to the cluster. In others, it seemed that the cluster schools had insufficiently committed themselves to the project, with the result that the flow of ideas and experience from hub to cluster was limited. More generally, we have noted a 'dilution effect'.

As we have suggested, involvement in the Postgraduate Certificate activities was frequently inspiring for teachers at the hub, who gained the kind of understanding of ensemble and rehearsal room pedagogy of which they could make autonomous use. For cluster teachers, though, the resources provided by the network tended to be interpreted in technical terms, relatively separate from RSC philosophy, or as contributions to particular, important but limited aspects of the work of the school – an improvement in literacy, for instance. The same kinds of divide noticeable in hub/cluster relationships were at work within schools, particularly secondary schools, where the 'LPN effect' was sometimes restricted to particular departments; in some cases, even the closeness of one department to another (English/Drama) did not seem to facilitate a flow of ideas.

To some extent, a dilution effect, or perhaps better, a translation of the LPN offer into terms that are shaped by local circumstance, is unavoidable. Any system of ideas and practices will be 'bought into' at different levels of comprehensiveness and commitment. The issue that has to be resolved has to do with the current extent of this process, and whether the dilution effect can be reduced. Could the LPN offer enthuse, motivate and equip teachers in the hub schools to an extent that they can more deeply affect practice, both in their own schools and in their clusters?

Part of the answer here depends upon the nature of the Postgraduate Certificate and the extent to which it can involve teachers at a deep level of learning. We have made some suggestions about this above.

We add to this the thought that the RSC and Warwick could construct the rhetoric of the programme differently, so that while the 'immediate' gains of the LPN are made clear, these are placed in the context of the deeper purposes articulated to us by RSC and Warwick educators. The tendency of some teachers' research projects to emphasise the immediate impact of the RSC approach on students' performance in tests and examinations, or on the alignment of ensemble work with the behavioural aspirations of 'Every Child Matters', has the effect of limiting reflection upon the wider educational possibilities of rehearsal room pedagogy, brought out in our Stratford and Warwick interviews.

Other answers have more to do with the institutional commitment of schools. Lack of time for teachers' collaboration with each other was a significant problem. Whole-school support for the LPN philosophy likewise tended to be lacking: some school leaders valued the connection to the RSC brand and saw a difference in the confidence and accomplishment of their students, but this was sometimes the limit of the LPN's recognition.

Some of the most successful work was enabled by the commitments of key local authority staff. Attempting to replicate this in times of reduced LA spending will be difficult but establishing connections between LPN schools and local networks of arts provision will remain an important principle.

The fundamental option of the LPN, to focus on schools in 'deprived' areas, is one we would support. Our experience of researching other projects around creativity in education suggests that these schools experience difficulties of various kinds – staff turnover, pressured work, punitive inspection, closure threats etc – that make it hard to stabilise programmes that initially promise significant change. Len Saunders, the local authority advisor whose views are discussed below, was referring to these conditions when he stressed that teachers' energies to develop the programme further were limited: 'We were aware that those teachers might become exhausted and it was quite hard for us to say that now we wanted them to do something on a local authority level. And I think that is actually a bit of a problem with the model.'

The LPN cannot resolve these problems, of course, but there are some productive measures that it could adopt, including

- offering schools additional resources beyond the core LPN offer, with higher level of post project support, including workshops and summer schools;
- initiating and fostering a network of programme alumni, so that teachers have a continuing point of reference and support;
- strengthening the local resource base by involving other universities in the development of the LPN;
- linking itself to the touring policy of the RSC, through workshops, audience development etc.

This approach would involve a scaling up of the project that would need to be carefully managed. The closeness of the relationship between Warwick, the RSC and schools is an asset that should not be discarded. Development is a question of evolution, rather than the rolling out of an initiative on a national scale.

#### **L. Extending the LPN model**

One of the questions we continued to ask ourselves throughout the project was about the scalability of the LPN as a model of teacher development. A further, unavoidable, question concerned the future of the LPN in a harsh funding environment, in which both education and theatre are subject to new pressures. There are no evident solutions to this second problem, though an emphasis on the quality of the RSC brand, and the value to schools of their involvement with it may continue to be persuasive.

In relation to scalability, we do think that, as a broad brush approach, there are some possibilities for the programme's extension. There is no doubt that the LPN has a unique history, being built on long term connections between Warwick and RSC staff. There is also no doubt that the RSC is a powerful 'brand' with considerable cultural cachet. However, these attributes are not unique. Creative Partnerships/Culture, Creativity and Education have been in operation for a comparatively long time, and there are now strong connections between some higher education institutions and high profile cultural sector organisations with equal but different 'brand power'. These organisations have missions which include the creation of audiences and of equal access to education, in relation to a particular arts form; they thus have similar kinds of motivation as the RSC with regard to the importance of changing teacher practice and students' educational experiences.

We can imagine that a small number of LPN type programmes could be set up around the country, working with higher education institutions to offer Masters level qualifications in and through new arts pedagogical practices. We think for example of film, modern dance, gallery practice, and contemporary theatre. Such ventures could take advantage of the shift to teaching as a Masters-level profession and together establish a different, more systematic and effective approach to teacher learning and educational change. Such programmes would make an offer which served the goals, needs and interests of schools and teachers, and provided a unique opportunity for development. It would work on the basis of

- (1) a secure, formal partnership between a cultural sector organisation and a higher education institution
- (2) complementary expertise - within the cultural sector organisation, practitioners with a history of successful engagement with schools, an established pedagogical approach and an understanding of postgraduate study; within the higher education institution academics with a history of research/teaching in the relevant creative practice and successful track record in continuing professional development through practitioner inquiry

- (3) cooperative development of the programme – its aims, scope and coverage; pedagogical approaches; assessment; and evaluation, joint marketing; clear allocation of responsibilities and explicit protocols for day-to-day management
- (4) a clear and explicit approach to classroom and/or school change, with appropriate practical and theoretical resources to provide optimal conditions for success.

We anticipate that there might be variations in the institutional model on offer. While there appear to be economies of scale offered in the hub and cluster model it does work variably, although further development might reduce this diversity, as we have proposed. We imagine that one variation might work from the success that the LPN has had with core teachers; for example, activities might focus on a corpus of teachers in a school to create a cadre of change practitioners within one institution, or they might focus on one or two teachers per school and also create a national network as does the National Writing Project in the USA. We also think that schools might well contribute more to the costs particularly if they involve direct experiences for their students as well as teachers.

### **Case Study 1: EVELYN**

*Evelyn works in Keystage 1 and describes herself as a creative teacher. She is located in a national school of creativity where there is strong institutional support for systematic long term CPD, innovation, experiential learning for staff and students and a commitment to bringing high status cultural capital into the lives of staff and students.*

*The headteacher asked Evelyn if she would be one of two lead teachers in the LPN programme and she agreed, but felt very nervous about Shakespeare, having last studied it at school.*

*My own understanding of Shakespeare was limited to work on Romeo and Juliet at GCE 'O' Level thirty years previously.*

*She reported feeling very 'unacademic' compared to upper primary and secondary teachers and was very nervous at the first weekend.*

*I've been a little bit intimidated by the other people on the LPN because mostly they are secondary teachers and I feel they have far more knowledge than I have.*

*Evelyn was not attracted to the LPN because of the opportunity to obtain a Postgraduate Certificate. What motivated her was the opportunity to learn something that would provide new experiences for the children she taught. After one year in the programme, Evelyn suggests that the*

*...active approaches that I have experienced through RSC Inset days have enabled me to understand how Shakespeare can be made accessible to young children, given that appropriate texts and activities are chosen.*

*There is little doubt that the LPN has built a sense of efficacy and competence, and supported Evelyn in experimenting responsibly. She has also been able to influence other teachers.*

*I've approached it with some trepidation and fear to be honest, but I've thoroughly enjoyed it. We're a three form entry school so there is myself and two other Year 1 teachers and they've taken on board all of my training really and they've gone with everything that I've suggested and I'm getting very positive comments back from them as well.*

*Most importantly, Evelyn has taken ideas offered by LPN and made them her own. She wanted the activities that she undertook to fit with her own and the school goals and not be an add-on project.*

*We're looking at that [improved outcomes] and certainly at literacy. Obviously my focus has been the motivation to write and the confidence to write ...I wanted us to trial some approaches first and so I considered 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' as the trial and 'The Tempest' as the body of the work.*

*Evelyn's headteacher was very familiar with the work Evelyn had talked about as a 'trial'*

*The children came back from the Christmas holidays and found fairy dust on the carpet and a tiny, tiny note. And it turns out to be from the fairies who are freezing outside in the snow, which has fallen heavily. And they said could they come and live in the classroom please? And so they went outside to look for the fairy houses and then they wrote, independently, about the fairy houses... Everybody's work is way above the expectations we have. They obviously had lots of opportunity for recording, and children who were not necessarily motivated to writing were clearly showing an interest. So they were stimulated to write back to the fairies and this idea went across the curriculum, so they were looking at things like waterproof things, and what kind of materials the fairies would need to protect themselves from water. So they were bringing that into science and more writing about that. And they wrote letters back to the fairies saying they were busy testing materials to see if it's waterproof, and the best material is plastic because the water can't get through it. So what we've got is another means of recording. Again, across the curriculum in IT, creating fairy images on IT packages; having a Fairy day and inviting people to come to a Fairy Day party, and writing invitations. And again, the quality and the application is really of a very good standard.*

*This was the cross curricular approach that Evelyn also took to 'The Tempest'. She linked the play to literacy and to a theme about friendship and home. She added several activities to those suggested by the RSC in order to make these connections. She developed a programme that allowed children to explore*

*...the friendship theme on the island in 'The Tempest'. This is something that the RSC and I wanted to have something ongoing in the classroom that we could keep coming back to and link with PSHE..*

*She approached the new activities with some trepidation.*

*... I suppose that's a fear of my own - if I need to introduce text how do I choose the right bit of text for that age group? It's got to be something that is relevant to what we are doing, and it's got to be something that they can understand.*

*Evelyn reported that 'it's gone really well and they've loved it'. In fact, the whole unit went so well that Evelyn has now begun drama lessons with new Reception children, teaching them how to be/work as an ensemble. The children describe this as:*

- *Everyone takes part.*
- *We all work together.*
- 

*She has had a set of class t-shirts printed with ENSEMBLE written on them. The children put them on when they go into the hall for drama. Evelyn now wants to make weekly drama integral to her planned programme.*



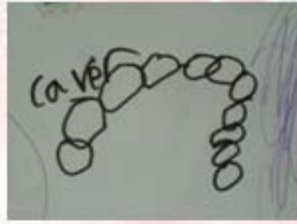
The children in Year 1 have been finding out about Shakespeare's play "The Tempest".



We started by looking at objects from the story. We tried to think about what the story might be about.



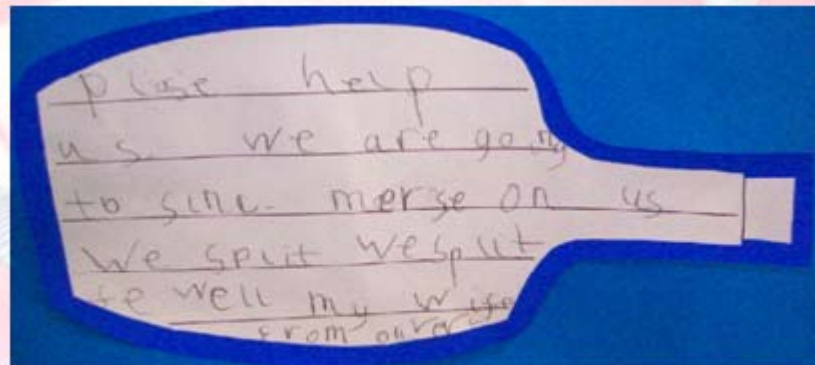
We knew that the setting of the story was an island so we worked together to design island settings.



We thought about what might be on the island, drew pictures and labelled them.



We thought about the messages that the people on the ship might write to put in a bottle to throw into the sea.



## Case Study 2: CLIFFORDS MANOR CLUSTER

*Cliffords Manor is a hub school, the only secondary, in an established local authority 'extended school' cluster involving several primaries (including Wilberforce Primary School—see Case Study 3 below) and one special school for children with 'severe and complex learning difficulties'. Before joining the RSC LPN, Cliffords Manor was a school that had already been involved in the Shakespeare Schools Festival, working on a production of 'The Tempest' staged in autumn 2008, a project that overlapped with its membership of the LPN in 2007, to which primary schools in the cluster had been invited. The headteacher of Cliffords Manor felt that the school had real strength in arts practice and consequently the school applied for, and was granted, performing and visual arts status in 2008. Being admitted to the RSC, in the head's view, strengthened their bid for specialist status and provided opportunities for staff and students alike:*

*[The school was] going for specialist status. And I certainly felt that this was something really prestigious for us and I want the girls and the staff of this school to be able to access prestigious opportunities for themselves...*

*As far as I'm concerned, the school can work in partnership with anybody, whether it's the primary school next door or a school in India or the RSC. I think this is an important part of what I believe ... we've become much more outward looking and seeing ourselves as having a wider remit. So working with different organisations was really important.*

*At the same time, the head wanted to 'encourage an outward looking school', was keen to take advantage of 'development opportunities for staff and the kids' and said that they saw themselves as having a 'wider remit ... working with different organisations'. The requirement to be seen to be involved in promoting community cohesion - for specialist schools, particularly, a key area of the Ofsted inspection framework - was seen by one lead teacher to be a significant and beneficial spin-off of being a hub school for the cluster:*

*There were benefits of different kinds that have become obvious on reflection and they weren't what we would have expected beforehand. Some of them were strategic and some of them were looking at the set, for example. And when you look at community cohesion, which is obviously a big thing now, then you've got to break that down into different strands and one of the difficult aspects of that is finding evidence for it. And actually a lot of the RSC stuff has given us things to put in there.*

*Benefits to student learning and achievement were nevertheless seen by the head to outweigh other advantages of partnership with the cluster's primary schools:*

*So the experience for my students to get involved... Then the liaising with the primary schools students ... and particularly the students working with students in the special school, and crossing some of those barriers that people find very difficult, that was very inspiring and the quality was outstanding. And that had all sorts of spin offs for the children themselves, but also their families in terms of coming to see their child performing in*

*Shakespeare when you might not have thought that he or she could do that. Because we were working with schools where children were struggling with their literacy and struggling with their understanding because it was a real mixed ability primary sector.*

*These views were backed up by comments made by students at the Cliffords Manor:*

*It was quite interesting because they are still in primary school and they sort of looked as if they sort of understood the language as well*

*One of the lead teachers reinforced and expanded on this point*

*Our middle-class, Church of England school next door, won't necessarily come here but I know that some of the parents who were really heavily involved with the 'Pericles' project were then here on opening evenings when their kids were going from Year 6 to Year 7. So they were here and they would not have necessarily come before. So there are those kinds of impact and then there are the other ones which I am personally more passionate about, which is the impact on the students in terms of their interaction with a wide range of other students from other schools, including [the] special school. And our students went out and worked with them in preparation for them performing in the festival. So even the impact on our Year 10 students who went out and worked with severely disabled students was great; it was really fantastic. But also, as the girls were kind of implying earlier, when they had a hard time dealing with that text and when they then saw Year 5 and Year 6 performing it, I think that was a really good thing for them to see that and actually to see that the work that they were doing was just as good really.*

*From a different perspective, the Deputy Head at the Special School in the cluster, already attached to Cliffords Manor 'as part of their specialist school status', felt that they had made a particular and positive contribution to the project.*

*I thought that our pupils were going to be able to improve the production and that would mean that it was better as a result of having them rather than they were there because it ought to include children with special needs. And I talked to the group about a piece of sound technology which we have, where the pupils are able to cross beams and create music through movement. And that was not something which the director had heard about or anybody in the group had heard about but I think the director thought that that would be useful and, in particular, he was interested in the notion of the children improving the production rather than being there because you should include children with special needs.*

*As well as strengthening links with local schools and an arts organisation, joining the LPN was seen by the Head of the hub school, as well as her Assistant Head in charge of CPD, as having offered opportunities for 'real development across different elements of the school'. The positions of the lead teachers within the school gave rise to the emergence of different perspectives and practices in developing links within and across departments, and in their dealings with schools in the cluster.*

*One lead teacher, Jill, became Head of the English department during the course of the LPN project. Jill had come into teaching 'quite late' and regarded herself to as having 'always been blessed with the good fortune of being a good classroom practitioner and when I have observations and things I'm lucky enough to have good results'. During her PGCE year she had had training from RSC practitioners:*

*to show us how we could incorporate some of their approaches into English teaching. And I really liked what I saw but didn't hear anymore about those opportunities until three years ago when we had a visitor from the RSC network asking if we would like to have an English teacher participate in this programme.*

*The improvement and enhancement of pedagogy in her department emerged as Jill's main focus. Involvement in practical workshops and in the academic work of the project gave her the 'chance to really think about how you are going to adapt that material to fit the dynamics of the class.' She 'implemented her methods' and did her project (keeping a journal of her teaching and writing the assignment for the Postgraduate Certificate), 'but with very little beyond the department'. Nonetheless, within a core subject area and one of the largest departments in the school, Jill felt her involvement in the project had had a real effect on approaches to teaching, not only in her own practice, but across her department.*

*One of my colleagues ... has been in teaching over thirty years and ... I know that she is using the ensemble methods with other texts as well with great success. And although the department has changed over the last few years ... we are still fostering those ensemble techniques and it was great for me to sit back and listen to my department talking about how they were going to introduce Shakespeare with 'Romeo and Juliet' to Year 9 and we were all hiding in the cupboards with our cloaks on, using [RSC practitioner's] method of creating two opposing sides in the classroom, and then we leap out as Prince Escalus and do our speech and it's fantastic and everybody is really animated about that. So we are regularly incorporating those methods into our classroom.*

*The particular emphasis on active approaches to teaching Shakespeare is evident too in the way that Jill spoke with animation about the effects on student learning.*

*I've seen the growth of students, particularly in their confidence and how they are able to engage so much more easily with the language of the script. And the enthusiasm with which they do this - because they love to act and even the shyest of people like to have a role in the classroom. And it's just blossomed for me and I'm now taking those methods and incorporating them into other English lessons with poetry and other fictional texts.*

*Insights into active approaches to learning informed the writing of her assignment for the Postgraduate Certificate. Here Jill speaks about the connections between close reading of Shakespeare, talk and student writing:*

*I'm not an expert in how the brain works, but it seems common sense to me now that if you can't think about an idea, it's a very articulate process of being able to see a task, interpret it, organise your ideas and communicate that in writing. But if they can talk about it—because we all*

*know that when they do their GCSE if they can't write some of the essays they can do an oral—so getting these students to actually engage with the script and talk about the language and being able to articulate their ideas to each other in a way that makes sense to them. And what I do is, after every section of the text, before they've forgotten that very valuable experience that they've gone through of talking about it and sharing it and formulating their ideas and interpreting the characters in a very practical way, then I will get them to write down a very short piece of their thought. So it's building on what I've been asked to do by the RSC.*

*The ripple effect on teaching and learning in the cluster schools, however, appeared to be more diffuse and somewhat diluted. For the special school, involvement in the LPN cluster served as an enhancement to their Arts Mark status. The deputy head there felt that their relative ease and expertise in the arts meant that they felt they had something positive to contribute to the project and that it supported the school's learning aims:*

*I think [involvement with the arts] lends itself to working on the kind of communications targets that the pupils need to be working on, but also the arts are a way of enabling the students to be more involved in the mainstream in terms of society and what's on offer. And also it's been very productive working with people in the arts and looking at how they can extend and make venues more accessible and performance content more accessible.*

*At Wilberforce Primary, involvement in the production inspired the making of a film (see Case Study 3, below), but also had its effects on approaches to teaching. In the first place, the project inspired confidence in working with Shakespeare, such that two weeks before being interviewed for this project, the Year 6 teacher had begun a project working on 'The Tempest':*

*we did story 'whoosh' techniques so that the children learnt the story and then we said 'write down anything that you can remember about the characters' and it's such a good way of learning a very complex plot.*

*Involvement in the LPN project enhanced this teacher's confidence in and understanding of the use and application of techniques of sequencing, animating and interrogating more complicated stories, including the story 'whoosh' and hot-seating.*

*I have now got a bank of techniques that I would use in the curriculum mainly in English and definitely now with Shakespeare.*

*This teacher saw applications for applying drama techniques acquired from or consolidated by involvement in the project, particularly in reference to the INSET book provided by the RSC...*

*we've used it in history with the Greeks and we've also used it in science with the water cycle. So just sometimes using drama rather than always using a text and I think that has given me the confidence to do that. So I would think 'how can I do this so that they are on their feet and not just sitting down?'*

*For each of the primary schools involved in the Cliffords Manor LPN cluster, another outcome is that the inclusive nature of ensemble work significantly enhanced teachers' and students' understanding of and competence in performance. In this sense, the emphasis of RSC educators on qualities such as 'agency' and 'responsibility' was reflected, though with a lesser degree of explicitness, at school level.*

*I had children with special needs and children with English as their additional language but it was totally inclusive, and when we did our own little performance to the rest of the school and to the parents as well, the staff were dumb struck because they were amazed that a child who had special needs was up there doing it even though they had a broken leg at the time as well! It was just a really positive experience for them really.*

*A teacher in another school was less positive about involvement in the cluster, however, seeing less of an impact on children's learning and achievement.*

*It's difficult to say whether one project has influenced that particularly. I think it's very good because the children are always happy to perform and it must have given those lacking in confidence more confidence because it was a positive experience. So I think, in that way, it was very good. I don't think it has had a huge impact on achievement really but then had we had a more accessible text it could have done and we could have done a lot of language work based on this.*

*Prior to taking up teaching, the other lead teacher's background was in theatre direction; he taught drama and was a Head of Year in the hub school. He had been heavily involved in the Shakespeare Schools Festival prior to joining the RSC LPN and, carrying this experience forward, took the lead role in organising the Cliffords Manor cluster production and festival competition. An emphasis on arts practice, specifically on theatrical production, had clear implications for the ways in which the LPN project worked within the school and across the cluster. Cross-school links, particularly with the Technology Department, from previous work on 'The Tempest' were strengthened through the LPN project. The Assistant Head with responsibility for CPD commented:*

*And I thought it was great because, again, the technology department was involved with that and they were in charge of the scenery and there were so many different curriculum groups involved and we had technology groups and drama. It was the cross links across departments and across the school and that was super*

*The extended school cluster that pre-existed the LPN cluster arrangement provided additional resources from its own budget to contribute to the Shakespeare project. The lead drama teacher liaised with the extended school cluster co-ordinator, who*

*agreed that £7,000 of that [extended school] budget would go on to this project. So I decided that we would involve a professional designer to work with us and we agreed with the technology department here that it*

*would be a joint project, and what we decided to do was the whole of Year 9 from the September, for half a term, would study 'Pericles' in drama and in technology. They would be set designing and designing costumes.*

*Pivotal to the collaboration between drama and technology, therefore, was the emphasis on the production and presentation of the cluster's Shakespeare play.*

*Our research found that the choice of text, the emphasis on production, and the processes leading up to the cluster's festival and competition, in particular an aspiration to develop high production values, gave rise to some significant issues for the cluster arrangement. Having worked on 'The Tempest' and with a background in theatre direction, the lead drama teacher chose to work on 'Pericles'. Interviews with teachers in the cluster produced some ambivalence about this. The teacher from Wilberforce, for instance, felt daunted when she first received materials:*

*we got sent the script of the play and a CD of the play and all this information and I just thought 'oh my goodness what on earth have I involved myself in?' I was always really quite fearful of Shakespeare when I was in school and I said 'I can't do this; it's too much. I'll never be able to deliver it'.*

*The fearfulness was ameliorated for her when she went to a meeting at the hub school and was offered lots of support from the lead teachers. A teacher at another school, however, was less positive.*

*I think 'Pericles' was a strange choice because it didn't lend itself to primary aged children. Some of the scenes are not something that you would share with nine year olds... Because with lots of the other plays you can get child friendly versions and the cartoon books that I've used in the past, but I searched everywhere and there was nothing. Whoever chose that play didn't think about primary school children.*

*Taking the directorial role, the lead drama teacher at Cliffords Manor divided the play into sections that were allocated at a cluster meeting:*

*That was during one of our inset meetings at [Cliffords] and [the lead teacher] had copied the play and divvied it up and we just sat round as a group and decided on who was going to do what. It kind of worked out all right and there were certainly no fights.*

*The teacher at another primary school in the cluster was also somewhat daunted, but then garnered support from others in the cluster:*

*I remember saying 'how do I go about doing this with Year 6 children?' and they gave me the confidence to tackle it full on. They told me that children can relate to this, so talk to them about the recent plot in 'Eastenders', and so I did talk to them about that. And they said that was really weird and so I said that this is what is happening in this play as well. So they gave me a lot of confidence to tackle that and they showed us how to go through the text and use the Shakespeare text but in a way that the children could understand and so that the children could speak*



*the language but know what they were saying and how that relates to the story. And they showed us how to select key words and how to use that in a sort of rhythmic sense with the children and how to bring dance and movement and music into it to really bring it to life.*

*Perceptions of how the collaborative process worked varied. However*

*The main thing really was that for a collaborative project there was no real collaboration. Basically the collaboration was we shared some training and we divided it up. There was a lot of having to walk up and down to Cliffords School and that takes forty-five minutes. So the week leading up to it, you had to go for one rehearsal for two or three days and then on the Thursday you had to walk up for your afternoon performance and then, on the Friday night, you had to do the evening performance.*

*As there was emphasis on the production, technical resources to support the production were inevitably concentrated at the secondary school at the hub of the cluster. Nonetheless, this teacher did concede that the children derived enjoyment from the experience.*

*The children loved it; they had a great time; they performed it and their parents loved it and so that was great. But I do think it could have been organised better.*

*For students and teachers alike, the involvement of RSC practitioners was invariably viewed as a positive and productive learning experience. Here one of the students at the hub school expresses this succinctly:*

*During rehearsals we had members of the RSC company come in and that actually stands out quite a lot in my memory. We got to learn a lot about the language and how to perform it and it was quite good to work with professionals.*

*For teachers, the flexibility and responsiveness of support from the RSC was greatly appreciated:*

*when they came in from the RSC it was based on what our needs were and where we were struggling and what we wanted ideas for. And I can remember that they were so useful – those days when the RSC came in and worked with us on our section of the play.*

*Another teacher appreciated the way that the RSC practitioner was positive, supporting the teacher, but also seeking the opinion of students:*

*She told us that we were doing a great job and she also helped us at the beginning because I was finding it a bit difficult to get started. So she came in twice I think and she brought along evaluations as well because she was very keen to find out immediately from the children about how the sessions had gone.*

### **Case Study 3: WILBERFORCE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

*Class 6 at Wilberforce Primary School made a film about 'our journey on Pericles'. The 27 minute film was shot and edited by the children. It has five main sections.*

*The film opens with a three-minute sequence showing the class playing circle and trust games together, climbing, balancing, chasing and rolling down a bank. The soundtrack, a song about being happy to be together, is cheerful and upbeat. The second section is a title sequence: the whole class run one by one on to the school steps holding up cards which spell out PERICLES, PRINCE OF TYRE, then the main characters introduce themselves in person. The third section begins with a panel of X Factor judges and pairs of children in role as TV hosts. They pose the question 'How did Class 6 become so good at drama?' This question is answered in two ways. First we see a sequence of warm-up drama activities using rhythm and mime, pair work, mirroring and sequencing enthusiastically performed in and around the school building by the class 6 children. Then we see workshop presentations of four scenes from the opening of 'Pericles', performed without words but accompanied by a musical soundtrack that evokes changes in mood as the action proceeds.*

*The fourth section of the film is introduced by another question posed by the TV hosts: 'Who could possibly have organised such a big project?' This leads in to a five minute interview with the drama teacher from the hub secondary school. The interview, which is conducted by two children from Wilberforce, is filmed largely from behind the drama teacher, so the focus is on the interviewers rather than the interviewee. The teacher explains the involvement of the RSC and the complexity of managing a project involving eight schools; he praises the inventiveness of all the students and tactfully ducks a final direct question about who he thinks should win the drama competition between the schools in the cluster. The competition, he explains, will be judged by members of the Royal Shakespeare Company. They will decide which school will be allowed to present their work at Stratford-upon-Avon.*

*The final phase of the film consists of an accomplished ten minute performance by the Wilberforce children which takes place, without costumes or props, in the drama studio of the hub secondary school. The scenes are the ones the school produced for the inter-school competition; they depict the rivalry between suitors for Princess Thaisa's hand and culminate in the marriage of Thaisa and Pericles and the interruption of the celebrations with the news of King Antiochus's death and Pericles' succession to the throne. The dramatic tension at the end of the performance gives way to the final frame, an information board which explains that the Wilberforce children were not selected to perform at Stratford, but that, nevertheless, they had enjoyed being involved in the project.*

*The children, we understand from the film, put their hearts and souls into this work, and produced an outstanding performance. We know, from the questions they asked the hub school drama teacher, how keen they were to perform at Stratford. The narrative logic of the film seemed to be building to a happy ending, so the final note of disappointment is somewhat jarring.*

*Lucy, class 6's teacher, who oversaw the making of the film for Wilberforce's annual Literacy Film Week, explained that the children 'were very competitive and they were gutted when they didn't get chosen'. As their teacher, she was also disappointed by the result and she questioned the justice of the judgements made:*

*I was gutted for them really. But they were really, really devastated. We'd managed to see little bits of the other schools and we thought that we were better than that. And actually the other thing that they felt was really unjust – and it has been explained - was that [the hub school] were chosen and they are a secondary school and they've got specialist drama teachers. And I just felt that that was a little bit unfair. So my children didn't feel that they had a chance of winning.*

*As for the parents who, along with the staff and students of Wilberforce, were the primary audience for the film,*

*...they thought it was unfair as well. The parents were really thrilled and really surprised at the level of performance that we put on with actually no props or anything. I can remember them being upset and they did think that it was really unfair that we were up against a secondary school. But somebody from the RSC came in and explained it all and, in fact, primaries from other clusters have been chosen and that was to ensure that they had a mixture at Stratford. But parents can't always see that.*

*Many of the parents had seen the performances on which the competition was judged. Lucy's view was that 'all the parents who had seen the whole thing thought that our school was the best.' But any disillusionment that might have been felt was with the process rather than with the competition itself:*

*What do you feel about it being a competition?  
I like it. I think it gave them a real focus and it gave them drive and motivation.*

*There was an evening performance and an afternoon one ...the evening one was for parents and the afternoon one was when the RSC was there and then the children would go on and do their bit and then they'd get feedback from whoever was there. And that was lovely, and that was then to judge who was going to go to Stratford to perform.*

*The way the event had been organised meant that the children from the different schools in the cluster did not see one another's performances:*

*...that was pretty much decided as to how it was going to work and I think, actually, one of the negative aspects of the way in which it was done was that our children never got to see the other part performed, and they were gutted about that. So they only ever saw their bit; they didn't ever see the whole thing. I can remember emailing and saying 'now that we've done the performance can we not all come back together and let them sit in the hall and each school put on their bit?' But they said that it was done now and we will get the DVD. But we never got it and it was a real shame. And they were gutted about that.*

*This affected Lucy's attitude to working in the cluster and with the RSC:*

*So you had your film week and so you still had somewhere to go with it. Has the cluster done anything together again since then?*

*No not really. It just happened and then it finished. I get the odd email from the RSC but we don't do anything more with them.*

*What do they email you about?*

*To be honest with you I kind of delete them because it tells me about other things that don't involve us.*

*Lucy had, however, been closely involved with the RSC during the project. Her original response to being part of the LPN had 'quite flippant': 'I kind of went through it and said 'fine, fine' but didn't really realise what I was taking on'. She was not a Shakespeare enthusiast: she had hated studying Shakespeare at school 'because I sat with a book and it was so boring' so she felt 'really quite fearful of Shakespeare'. She had not managed to attend the first meeting at the hub school where the cluster decided which play to work on. So when 'Pericles' was sent out to the teachers in July, Lucy remembered putting it in her bag and thinking that she would read it over the summer.*

*...but I never did. And then when I came back and I looked at it, I thought 'oh my goodness!'*

*In September she received a script, a CD and 'all this information' from the hub secondary school. The play had been 'divided up and we all got a little bit'. This reduced her qualms, in that it seemed 'more plausible' to work on just one section of the play, but it was the in-service training sessions with RSC staff that really convinced Lucy of the value of involvement in the project:*

*...the insets were brilliant actually and we did lots of things that we would then go back to school and do. I can remember the first thing that we did was we learnt the story of Pericles and we did it with a 'whoosh', and I'm still using that technique now. So they were basically showing us things that we would then go back and do with our children: lots of different drama games and activities that would help them to get to know characters and feelings.*

*Follow-up work with RSC staff in school with the children was also hugely successful:*

*[The children] absolutely loved it. The practitioners that came in were brilliant and they gave us lots of ideas for stuff from other areas which we are still using.*

*The new teaching techniques she had learned were very useful to her:*

*...we also used the techniques at Christmas in that year and we did lots of drama around the Christmas story and our head teacher came in one day and said 'what are you doing?' And I said that we were doing the*

*Christmas drama and he asked if we could do that in assembly and so we did. We did lots of things with moving images – no talking, just all really powerful images – and then, following that, we did a bit in science as well and we did a little bit about the water cycle...*

*But last term we used it [the 'whoosh'] a lot and if there's a story we will use it. We used at the beginning of the year when we were reading the Arthur Conan Doyle story, 'The Speckled Band', and we used it for that. I was talking to one of my colleagues the other day about it and they were saying that it was really good and they could use it for their own subjects. So we've use the techniques a lot.*

*...we've used it in history with the Greeks...and we did a lot of drama with 'The Highwayman' and then they had to write in role and their writing was very lively and very empathetic...*

*Lucy set great store by the RSC Shakespeare INSET resources:*

*This inset book is really good and a few weeks ago I thought I had lost it and I was gutted. I actually rang up [Cliffords Manor] to ask if they had another one but they didn't. But I found it the other day and I was really relieved. It's got lots of techniques... lots of different techniques there for engaging with a story.*

*Learning these pedagogic techniques had changed Lucy's teaching:*

*I'd done the kind of classic hot seating and all of that, but nothing like this really. I just didn't know about it and I didn't know how.*

*When she summed up what she had gained from the project, her response was*

*I have now got a bank of techniques that I would use in the curriculum, mainly in English and definitely now with Shakespeare.*

*She thought the techniques could usefully be shared with other staff but there were no plans in the school to do this:*

*Does that get fed into the school? Is it part of the CPD for the school?*

*It could be. Informally it could be but we haven't done it at the minute. But it could be.*

*The children were responsive:*

*They just really love anything to do with drama and so they've responded really well to using new techniques.*

*These factors had persuaded Lucy to attempt a production of 'The Tempest' with her new class.*

*We chose 'The Tempest' and we started two weeks ago and we did story 'whoosh' technique so that the children learnt the story and then we said 'write down anything that you can remember about the characters' and it's such a good way of learning a very complex plot. And then, this week, I've just read them this little modern version which has aspects of the original*

*script in and then we'd say 'right we did this outside yesterday so you've got twenty seconds to create a still image'. So they did that and now we're at the stage where we did auditions today and we will definitely put some of the original script into the production.*

*Her approach had been to find an adaptation of the play and engage the children by using the techniques she had learned:*

*It really does help the talented children when it is adapted with great songs and it's a great way for them to engage with Shakespeare.*

*The process and outcomes of the original project work, documented for the school's wider community with such care and pride in the film had, in Lucy's mind, offered her significant support in her teaching:*

*I don't think, if we hadn't done 'Pericles', I would have had the confidence to say let's do 'The Tempest' even despite the fact that it's in modern day English.*

*I thought it was brilliant, a really good project. And a lot of the techniques we are still using.*

#### **Case Study 4: WELLINGFORD LOCAL AUTHORITY**

*In Wellingford, Len Saunders, the Local Authority English and Drama advisor, has been a key figure in initiating and supporting the work of the LPN. Professionally active in a variety of networks and initiatives, Len was already involved with the RSC before the project began. Len brokered the project with local schools:*

*I think it [the LPN involvement] actually came via [Len Saunders], who is an advisor in our authority, but he's also got links with the Royal Shakespeare Company and various art groups. So he kind of keeps us in touch about things and he's a good source for us in terms of these sorts of projects.*

*(Lead practitioner, now head of the hub school)*

*Len's approach was to identify key teachers with a strong understanding of the underpinning principles of the work, including, for example, 'a very influential head teacher ...who was terribly committed to the creative curriculum at a time when it was not fashionable'. He set out to 'harness the leadership and the skills of those key teachers' and at the same time recruited a colleague within the Local Authority who was running the primary network programme: 'we were both very enthusiastic about this and so we essentially sold it to those two head teachers and they then made their bids to the RSC.'*

*Len's approach was based on his knowledge of the locality and his professional commitment to drama education, but he also actively 'sold' the idea to the two heads and, in turn, 'those two head teachers were remarkably persuasive [with their own colleagues and teachers in other schools]'. Selling the chance to be involved in the initial, funded, phase of the project was important because ultimately 'we're going to be asking schools if they want to buy into this.' With the sales pitch came the commitment to ensuring that the project was a success:*

*We always knew that we were going to support it through the primary network way.*

*(Len Saunders)*

*[Len] has led the training on this project as well and he had early involvement. .. at the beginning of the project he was there at every meeting and we discussed how the festival could work and he brought in the educational perspective and he was able to tell us what the teachers feel and what they wanted. And he led a half-day training session and some ensemble work on techniques that the teachers could take back with them.*

*(Theatre in Education company leader)*

*This commitment to the success of the work inspired confidence in the teachers and in the Theatre in Education (TIE) company members who got involved as the project progressed. They felt valued*

*I'm sure the borough council will [fund it] because they love us a lot and supported on a day to day basis:*

*[Len] is always on hand if I need any advice and he's always there at the performances and he always rings to ask how is it going?*

*They also understood that the intention was to create a sustainable set of educational practices, not simply to engage in a short term project. For some, Len himself symbolised this commitment to sustaining the work:*

*So I think it will carry on; [Len Saunders] won't let something like this go, even if it downsizes. (TIE company member)*

*As well as displaying these personal qualities, Len Saunders had been influential in developing an analysis of how the LPN work could be sustained in Wellingford. At the Local Authority level, he identified the strategic initiatives and linked the LPN project to significant educational agendas and funding streams.*

*Coincidentally, and luckily, we were, at that time, left with some money for primary learning networks and we had two networks, containing about half a dozen primary schools each, which were focused on something like pursuit of excellence. The reason for that was because they were a network for the schools that were already some distance away from their floor targets; they were either schools that were rocketing or they were schools that might have been in danger of collapsing.*

*Now this is where the funding issue comes in, where we've been lucky. Because during this period we've been very lucky to have an RGO – a Regional Government Office – funded literacy programme called Inspire [Wellingford] and that has meant for us, in the last two and a half years, a resource input of just short of £3 million. That covers a whole range of literacy and literacy spin offs. And the Shakespeare children's festival has been funded with that money. That is paying mainly for [TIE company leader]'s time and she's working with groups of schools...*

*(Len Saunders)*

*The Shakespeare work was therefore closely connected to the literacy agenda and to the structures that were being established to promote collaborative working. By these means the LPN work took advantage of the momentum of the other initiatives. As the head teacher of one of the cluster schools put it,*

*the idea in [Wellingford] at the moment is that we need to be working as a learning community and so you are no longer isolated in your own school and that's the way that we're going. We're going to co-operate first with the literacy ...it's exciting.*

*Len's view was that 'we are not allowing bureaucracy to get in the way' but his approach also took account of the power dynamics of the educational settings. His earlier work with the RSC had 'open[ed] up my eyes to rehearsal room techniques and how they could be useful to teachers, particularly teachers of English as opposed to teachers of drama' and he had arrived at the view that the co-option of local English teachers was very important to the success of the project.*



*I think our English teachers are much more influential in terms of Shakespeare than drama teachers. They're the big constituency to win over. The campaign with them is to rival the lure of easy options, which in the end tends to turn out to be chucking a DVD in the machine on the spurious grounds that it will have some sort of relevance.*

*Another important strand of the analysis related to the capacity of individual teachers to maintain and develop their involvement. 'The danger', Len said, 'would be teacher fatigue.' 'We were aware that those teachers might become exhausted and it was quite hard for us to say that now we wanted them to do something on a local authority level. And I think that is actually a bit of a problem with the model.'*

*This perceived problem with the LPN model was tackled in two ways. Firstly, the project leaders adopted a flexible approach to the hub and cluster model of grouping the schools. The initial work took place in the cluster, but as it progressed the school groupings changed to reflect local interest and capacity.*

*It wasn't really a cluster thing although some schools from the cluster did take part. It was just whichever schools were interested in doing this could sign up.*

*(Lead practitioner, now head of the hub school)*

*The Local Authority networks and organisation therefore became more salient in the collaborations than the LPN structure. This was seen as a means of mitigating the likelihood of fatigue amongst teachers 'isolated in a cluster' and, particularly, of shoring up the third year work:*

*Without the partnership of the local authority and all the other things, there is a danger that the third year would never take place. The third year looks essentially shot through with opportunities to fail, in my opinion. We're determined that it isn't going to fail, and the RSC have been very generous with their concern and their support. But it could have gone. (Len Saunders)*

*The second strategy to reduce teacher fatigue involved employing a Wellingford based theatre company to support and co-ordinate the festival planning and performances. The festival involved*

*five nights of primary Shakespeare. One thing we couldn't possibly have done was to ask those teachers to do it themselves. We couldn't either simply ask the RSC education department to do it all because that is not their job. So it seemed to us a good opportunity to involve one of our local TIE companies. So, about this time last year, I got in touch with somebody I knew at a local TIE...*

*(Len Saunders)*

*The strategy of employing a local theatre company was part of a general approach to using local cultural and educational resources to develop a strong civic dimension to the work. Participants' pride in Wellingford as a place, and their*

concern to engage local people and institutions, are notable features of the way the Shakespeare work is discussed.

*The audience were parents from the other schools of the children who had taken part and we had all sorts of dignitaries from the local authority and from the community - interested people from the authority. But we were packed out for both performances because we did an afternoon performance and then an evening performance. (Lead practitioner, now head of the hub school)*

*The theatres in [Wellingford] are very, very helpful I would say and they will always come to meetings with us to talk about programming both at the Arts Centre and at the Civic. The Civic, over the years, has reduced hugely its professional programming. It's a two hundred seater building in the centre of town and it's well loved in [Wellingford] and if it were to go people would be very upset. But it's a very, very greying audience and it tends to be for - a lot of plays put on there still have 1/6d on the inside – do you know what I mean?*

*(Len Saunders)*

*Another head teacher reported the Local Authority officers' pride in the work:*

*we had a big event in [Wellingford] last year and the senior effectiveness service set up a head teachers' meeting to say we should have **seen** what was happening to the children!*

*Len explained that there was 'a very strong commitment to the arts within this service' and that an important part of the Local Authority's strategy was 'to use local collections and resources and to run our own [Wellingford] version' of national cultural initiatives, like the RSC's programme or the National Gallery's 'Take One Picture' scheme. This approach in Wellingford was supported by the 'Woscars', a local Oscar award ceremony.*

*Supporting the development of the Shakespeare project therefore became linked to standing up for and improving Wellingford, its people and its institutions. Len saw the Local Authority as providing 'the coordination and the moral leadership – the commitment and vision – that otherwise a smallish group of primary schools would find it very hard to either sustain or to make evident.' He explained that*

*Our issue in [Wellingford] is to do with being one of the fifty poorest places in Europe. Our literacy standards are much lower than we want them to be, so we've got major challenges here. I wanted to do something that was much more focused on reading, writing, speaking and listening. So we developed three cohorts now of primary teachers, and we are developing... techniques which, essentially, are not a million miles away from a rehearsal room technique. They are ways of reading and ways of preparing children to write using drama. So Shakespeare was never separate from that initiative. We are concerned that our children get a wonderful experience from doing the Shakespeare, but that there will be spin offs too in their own literacy.*

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## Appendix One: Learning and Performance Network Financial Analysis

	Income	Total	RSC	HEFCE	CP	Schools
	Project delivery costs	530,623	8, 446	70, 460	300,000	151, 718
06/07	RSC core staff costs	33,319	33,319			
07/08	RSC core staff costs	90, 459	90, 459			
08/09	RSC core staff costs	103,816	103,816			
	Contribution to core			34, 040		
07/09	staffing	34,040	127,679			
09/10	staffing	127, 679	92,000			
	Core project costs	92,000				
<b>Total income</b>		<b>1, 011,936</b>	<b>455,719</b>	<b>104,500</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>151,716</b>

### Direct Project Expenditure

Cohort	Phase	Total	RSC	HEFCE	CP	Schools
1	Year One 2006-2007	38, 948	8,446	12,562	0	17,940
1	Year 2 2007-2008	76, 471	0	13,731	55,091	7,650
1	Year 3 2008-2009	34, 056	0	0	34, 056	0
2	Year One 2007-2008	52, 367	0	17, 188	5,208	29,970
2	Year Two 2008-2009	98, 392	0	22,618	59,674	16,100
2	Year Three 2009-2010	40, 464	0	0	39,964	500
3	Year One	43, 331	0	12,915	10,556	19,880

	2008-2009					
3	Year Two 2009-2010	95, 247	0	25, 487	59,465	10,295
3	Year Three 2010-2011	36, 486	0	0	35,986	500
4	Year One 2009-2010	43,000	22,000	0	0	21,000
4	Year Two 2010-2011	57,900	35,000	0	0	22,900
4	Year Three 2011-2012	40,000	35,000	0	0	5,000
	Delivery costs	556, 216		104,500	300.,000	151,716
	RSC core costs	455, 719	455,719	0	0	0
	<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1,011, 935</b>	<b>455,719</b>	<b>104,500</b>	<b>300,000</b>	<b>151,716</b>

**Notes:**

Year 1 The capacity building year – English teachers from 10 hub schools undertake action research and 2 INSETS in each cluster

Year 2 - Drama teachers undertake action research and further INSETS and support leading to local festivals and national festival at RSC

Year 3\* - Youth ensemble at Stratford and further INSETS in cluster schools plus future planning.

\*Year 3 model is currently under review

**All figures supplied by RSC**