

A critical review of the Creative Partnerships archive

How was cultural value understood, researched and evidenced?

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Summary

The Creative Partnerships (CP) archive offers the opportunity to understand more about the impact and effects of creative practitioners, mainly artists, working with students, teachers and schools. We examined what CP commissioned research might have to say about the cultural value of the CP offer, as well as the ways in which this research was conceptualised.

CP did not operate in with either/or mission: its cultural offer was understood as having both extrinsic and intrinsic values. Like schooling more generally, CP always understood its mandate to be wide-ranging. Because of its focus on creativity, CP did not see its outcomes as being about arts learning, but about learning more generally.

There is some research evidence in the archive for CP supporting modest gains in learning within formal school curriculum areas, as measured by tests and exams. There is stronger evidence for it encouraging enjoyment and engagement in school: this evidence ranges from improvements in attendance to increased motivation. Our analysis of the publicly available research in the CP archive suggests that overall the programme did produce considerable benefits for young people in the areas of wellbeing, citizenship and work-related skills and habits, areas of interest to the AHRC cultural value programme. There were also learning gains for teachers through the professional development opportunities on offer.

CP's commissioned research was designed to provide 'evidence' of impact, but also to inform the development of the programme through theory building and the provision of heuristics for teacher and school learning. This is an approach of interest to future arts and creativity initiatives. However, CP did not develop a longitudinal study tracking students and teachers learning over time: this is something any future national arts based or cultural programme needs to do.

Background

From 2002-2011 CP funded creative practitioners to work with teachers and schools. The most ambitious, biggest and longest running arts education intervention in the world, CP aimed to transform students' experiences of schooling, expand teachers' classroom approaches and dramatically improve the ways in which schools functioned and performed. Its focus was on 'creative learning' and whole school change.

In its lifetime, Creative Partnerships worked intensively with over 5,000 schools across England, 90,000 teachers and over 1 million young people. It touched 1 in 4 schools in the country, from nurseries and Pupil Referral Units to sixth form colleges. It supported 54 national schools of creativity, and some 1500 change schools, all of which exhibited exemplary creative learning practices. Over 6,500 national arts and creativity organisations were involved in CP. Because 70% of the funding went to support creative practitioners, Price Waterhouse Coopers estimated that each CP£1 generated £15.3 of economic value.

Unlike many educational reform initiatives, CP took research and evaluation very seriously. It commissioned 12 literature reviews on topics ranging from discourses of creativity to definitions of the creative industries. It commissioned ongoing research projects designed to inform the national and regional CP organisation, the teaching profession, arts sector and the scholarly community. All schools receiving funding were expected to operate through an inquiry approach, and every project was evaluated. In 2007 CP adopted a national evaluation framework and all schools were required to submit annual plans and summative reports of their activities, investigations and findings. While there were summary reports made of each year's activity, there was no attempt within the programme to bring together research project reports other than as short and separate public summaries and headline findings on the website.

This project aimed to interrogate the CP archive to ascertain what it might have to offer understandings about cultural value, and how cultural value might be defined, researched and evidenced. Its objective was to conduct a critical review of CP research reports, literature reviews, programme materials and a representative sample of national and regional evaluation reports to investigate:

- (1) what definitions of creativity might the CP archive have to offer the AHRC rubric for 'cultural value'
- (2) what methodologies and methods were used in creativity research by academics and by school practitioner-inquirers
- (3) what kinds of evidence were generated through these methods and therefore to
- (4) offer some evaluation of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches, and
- (5) identify any potential areas for further investigation using the cultural value rubric.

The research

The first stage of the project was to map out the materials that were publicly available on the two websites:

- (1) the Creative Partnerships website (www.creative-partnerships.com) now a static site on which there are no stored materials and
- (2) Creativity, Culture and Education (www.creativitycultureeducation.org) the site used by the charity which continues the work of CP in a range of international locations.

The CCE online archive of research reports contains 146 documents. Many of these were either produced or commissioned by CP. These include: eleven summary documents with exemplars; a series of twelve literature reviews; and 46 research reports. These reports use either one or a combination of statistical, survey-based, case study and qualitative methodologies. They explore or evaluate CP practice in relation to various dimensions: student attainment, behaviour and attendance; parental engagement and community resilience; learning and creative learning; teachers, creative practitioners and pedagogy; school ethos, wellbeing and processes of school change; and the creative economy (See Appendix A).

The other 82 texts, which have been added to the archive but are not CP or CCE commissioned or published documents, are academic papers, think-tank reports, political manifestoes, or policy documents. They address a wide range of issues: civic or social inclusion; family; voice, agency and wellbeing; pedagogy and teaching; cognition; creativity as an educational priority; the analysis of education policy; Creative Partnerships as a reform initiative; regeneration; work in the cultural or creative sectors; and the cultural or creative industries (See Appendix B).

All documents were tagged by CCE to make them searchable via a limited number of key words. We used these tags but also sorted the papers by type and by date of publication. We were thus able to place the research in the context of changes in the programme's organisation. We also conducted a search for academic papers and books related to Creative Partnerships, most of which stemmed from nationally commissioned research, although some emanated from regional research. The CP national archive does not include the regional materials and only some of the scholarly corpus.

The second stage of the project was to critically analyse the public texts. In a first pass through the data two of the research team closely read and analysed each of the 64 commissioned documents asking the following questions:

- (1) how is the value of the CP offer understood?
- (2) what benefits is the CP offer said to produce and how is this defined?
- (3) what methods are used to investigate this benefit?
- (4) what evidence is produced?

Our data was produced as textual extracts and then coded and thematised using NVivo. A separate second stage of analysis, using the same processes of close reading, coding and thematising, was undertaken for key categories: wellbeing, student voice, teachers' learning and school change, and vocational and work related learning. We also examined the research methods used across the programme, looking not only for what was done, but also what was not. This analysis forms a substantive part of this report.

A third stage of the project took the pages of each website and, using a discourse analytic approach, examined the ways in which the cultural offer of CP was represented. This analysis informs the next section of this report.

A final and brief stage was to take a small sample (n=25) of the school evaluation documents to see what they might yield. However we did not have time to do a great deal with these texts other than to see that the ways in which the evaluation framework functioned to produce particular kinds of data, understandings and conclusions. These texts require a separate analysis in its own right. This was beyond our capacity in the time frame of this project. CP evaluation is discussed further in the last section of this report.

Creative Partnerships and its purposes

In considering how Creative Partnerships might connect with questions of cultural value it is important to recognize that:

(1) CP had to address multiple agendas

Throughout its lifetime, Creative Partnerships had to meet mixed mandates. Like many educational reform initiatives, CP was designed to satisfy different interest groups, priorities and needs. Funded primarily by the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the Department for Education, it was one response to the "All our futures" report (DCMS/DfEE, 1999). As such, CP was intended to meet broad economic, cultural and social national goals. At a programmatic level, this meant that CP had to serve both the arts and education.

CP was initially targeted at schools serving highly deprived neighbourhoods. This focus sutured together a compensatory view – that children who would otherwise not encounter the arts did so – and an educational equity mission – these were schools that generally struggled to meet national targets. CP would therefore bring additional resources to address learning needs and meet cultural goals at the same time. There was also a strong commitment to a school improvement agenda – CP would foster school based innovation and support teacher professional development and teacher professional judgment. This agenda became more dominant in the programme's later years.

CP also co-joined notions of creativity and the arts. Creative Partnership texts largely avoided saying that the vast majority of creative practitioners employed in the programme were artists, and that the vast majority of projects it funded were either about bringing the arts to other areas of the curriculum, or bringing professional artists to work in the school arts curriculum (BOP Consulting, 2006). It was only towards the end of the programme that conversation about artists came to the fore. Yet in its annual reporting to the DCMS, it was clear that arts participation goals – development of young people as audiences, as producers, as potential cultural workers in creative industries – were also always important. The conflation of arts and creativity however was to play out in regional organisations and schools as sets of vastly different approaches and activities, as the research in the archive testifies.

CP's educational work was framed by a policy settlement which relied on school autonomy, standards based accountability measures, continued self evaluation and national curriculum, tests and targets. CP aimed to both meet and disrupt the standards based agenda (Jones & Thomson, 2008). This policy agenda, while not negating goals of citizenship and individual growth, tended to emphasise vocational and national human capital goals. CP was thus always bound to discuss its involvement in schools through reference to the cultural industries and a general notion of a 21st century knowledge

economy workforce, as well as standards. CP brought these possibly incompatible ends together through a focus on changing pedagogies and later, whole school practices.

Additionally, the focus on creativity across the curriculum meant that CP was also inflected by tensions within and about arts education, namely, whether it ought to be judged as an area of learning in its own right, or whether it can be seen to lead to – or be correlated with – improvements in learning in other curriculum domains.

(2) CP continually had to balance extrinsic and intrinsic goals

The CP programme worked with two competing notions of value. In one, the value of experience was intrinsic and seen as valuable in itself. In the other, value was instrumental - it lay in its impact on people and society.

One strand of CP's work was about "ensuring that all young people have access to a wide range of cultural and artistic experiences" (Creative Partnerships, 2009, p. 5). Particularly early on, its emphasis was on "cultural entitlement" and the most deprived areas in the country and the schools facing greatest challenges with the least tradition of arts or creative education (Pringle & Harland, 2008; Sharp et al., 2006). This emphasis became weaker in the later years of the programme when the focus was less on culture and more on learning. Yet a strand of the commissioned research continued to see CP's aim as intrinsic, in the sense that it was to change pedagogy and schooling to give young people access to "authentic, 'deep' educational experience" (Sefton-Green, Parker, & Ruthra-Rajan, 2008, p. 12). A body of CP research was thus concerned with "temporary and fragile space/times within school where it was possible to be/do/know/live together differently'" and in which young people could "gain a new embodied understanding of who they were, what they could do now, and what they might do in the future" (Thomson, Hall, Jones, & Sefton Green, 2012, p. 7).

Another strand of CP's research was concerned with the extrinsic value of the programme. CP consistently commissioned reports to show that it improved academic attainment (Cooper, Benton, & Sharp, 2011; Eames, Benton, Sharp, & Kendall, 2006; Kendall, Morrison, Yeshanew, & Sharp, 2008); these are discussed further in the next and last sections. And "creative learning" - the concept through which CP came to characterise its practice – was also judged by researchers to have a wide range of "impacts", "effects" and "social outputs"(Sefton-Green, 2007). Such research defined creativity as a set of dispositions and habits necessary to young people's personal, social and community development and to building a flexible workforce able to compete in a global market (Spencer, Lucas, & Claxton, 2012, pp. 16-17). In CP's summary documents, this approach to value is dominant; CP is about generating "the ability to question, make connections, innovate, problem solve, communicate, collaborate and to reflect critically" which are "the skills that are demanded by today's employers" (Creative Partnerships, 2009, p. 5).

These approaches remained more or less divided in the research, until one of CP's last commissioned projects (McLellan, Galton, Steward, & Page, 2012) which combined the extrinsic and intrinsic in the construct of "wellbeing". The report argues that involvement in CP, through the wellbeing it brings, impacts motivation, self-confidence, self-regulation and feelings of belonging to a community. But it also describes another effect: achievements such as competency, autonomy and relatedness, it argues, are what produce wellbeing. This rhetoric showed that to argue that desirable dispositions such as motivation and self-regulation are tied to a particular experience does not necessarily require talk of a binary effect.

Creative Partnerships and evidence of its impact

CP claimed a number of outcomes from its cultural offer. These were both at the level of the individual and the school. In this section we discuss some broad claims that are made for the programme through the research and CP documents, before going on to discuss in more detail some key claims germane to cultural value.

(1) improved attendance

Case studies of schools invariably noted improved attendance. At a macro level this was borne out over time and across the whole programme. The biggest improvements appear to have been in primary schools involved in the programme for several years (Durbin et al., 2010): The CP document *Changing young lives* (Creativity Culture and Education, 2012) provides graphs which show primary school attendance improvement over a five year period.

(2) improved motivation and application

Case studies and ethnographies clearly show that teachers believed students to be generally more enthusiastic and engaged in learning when creative approaches were taken.

(3) improved learning

This was perhaps the most difficult area for CP and the one where they wanted most to demonstrate change. Annual research by NFER shows modest, but statistically significant, improvements at all key stages across all schools (Parker, 2013, pp. 82-83). However some individual schools claimed significant changes in learning – the National Schools of Creativity in particular often demonstrated impressive learning improvements (e.g. Faultley, Hatcher, & Millard, 2011; Thomson & Clifton, 2013).

(5) Improved 'soft skills

Research reports suggest that the vast majority of schools claimed significant benefits for children and young people in terms of 'soft' skills associated with citizenship, well being and employment – a sense of efficacy and agency; ability to work together as a team, collaborate, cooperate, negotiate and make decisions; ability to have ideas and carry them through; capacity to express themselves and to communicate with a wider

range of people using different genres and media; learning greater respect for and appreciation of others; having a greater sense of personal satisfaction and happiness. We unpack these 'soft skills' in more detail in the next sections.

(4) improved relations with parents and the community

Many of the case studies claimed that CP produced better relations with parents and the wider community. Schools had more to offer audiences, more to communicate via newsletters and mainstream media. Some schools saw this as part of their cultural offer to the community, but this was often combined with marketing designed to increase enrolments and reputation (Thomson, Jones, & Hall, 2009).

(5) schools were 'better places'.

Researchers report that schools were overwhelmingly positive about the benefits of CP, even if its bureaucratic processes at times frustrated them. Almost without fail, researcher note, schools reported that: they were happier, livelier, more positive places; the general working and material environment was better; teacher morale was higher; and they had a sense of freedom to innovate and take some initiative in relation to their programmes which they had missed. This is a positive expression of the 'cultural value' of CP as seen by school staffs.

These can be seen as evidence of the value of the programme within its educational-arts framing.

Creative Partnerships and cultural value

We identified five areas for which a number of research projects claimed a CP 'effect'. These are:

- A. Creative learning
- B. Teacher development
- C. Wellbeing
- D. Work related skills/ Vocational training (WRS/ VT)
- E. Youth 'voice'

We address each of these in turn, discussing the definitions, processes and the specific contribution that CP made. The specific literature used to produce this analysis are listed on our blog (see Links for URL).

A. Creative Learning

Learning was variously described in the research as either procedural - process, approach, method and a "habit" – or as an objective entity to be measured – attainment, achievement, gaining skills and knowledge. Learning was linked to motivation and engagement: it was said to occur when learners take an interest. Learning was described

as contextually defined, dialogic and holistic. It was a product of both intelligence and behaviour.

Creative learning had some distinguishing features. It shared with learning more generally the duality of being both process and product. However, it was variously described in the literatures for example - being flexible, being an agent of change, and a journey. It had a strong connection with Enlightenment ideals of progress and personal development, overlaid with critical pedagogy notions of empowerment. Qualities such as the capacity to have ideas, generate possibilities, find solutions to problems, taken risks, balanced skills with challenge and the capacity to meta-learn were regularly mentioned.

CP generated a considerable amount of material about creative learning including in its evaluative framework (reproduced in the appendix in Parker, 2013) and the Tyneside region's wheel of creativity' (see figure 1 below) intended to support classroom planning and assessment.

Creative learning was also defined by what it is not - it is "not paperwork" (Sefton-Green, 2011) and not repetitive formulaic lessons (Thomson, Hall, & Jones, 2010). It was also "complex, opaque, problematic to measure" (Sefton-Green, 2011); nevertheless, at the end of the programme a rubric to measure creative learning was developed (Spencer et al., 2012).



Figure 1: The creativity wheel (Redmond, n.d) - creative learning is broken down into observable/measurable/plan-able aspects

How creative learning was produced

The literatures suggest eight processes through which learning outcomes were achieved:

- CP brought new resources into the school; it offered new opportunities and experiences to teachers and students through new technologies and different art forms and media.
- The Creative Agent acted as a catalyst and champion for change and introduced 'signature pedagogies'.
- CP supported improvement to school capacities by making changes to physical spaces, focusing on learning, and strengthening human capabilities.
- Specifically, CP supported teacher development to build new learning-focused networks, skills, knowledges and practices.

- CP advocated curriculum reform, or a shift in pedagogic approach to a more creative approach which involved cross-school and/or cross-curricular work, often based on real-life issues and concerns.
- CP encouraged schools to engage parents and the community through capitalizing on the students' positive experiences and enthusiasm to bring parents into schools, and also making tempting offers for parents to engage in their own learning opportunities.
- In urging a change in school ethos, CP 'gave permission' to schools to embrace creativity and creative approaches to teaching and learning.
- Championing youth voice and student involvement, CP gave students more say in their learning, creating a more personalized learning experience.

Across the research, what seemed to be most significant about CP's cultural offer were the intensity and length of involvement that was possible and its shared and compelling vision for schooling, its support for teachers professional work and judgment, the advocacy of student involvement and ownership, and its arts-based pedagogies.

B. Teacher Development

Lamont, Jeffes and Lord (2010) argued that CP produced personal, interpersonal and leadership, teaching and learning and career impacts: these constituted teacher development. Other researchers concur with this spread of outcomes, but add that CP was designed to produce permanent changes in teachers through a "paradigm shift" in their attitudes towards creativity in teaching and learning. This required individual capacity building (i.e. developing skills) as well institutional changes in school ethos, pedagogy and curriculum. Encouraging teacher creativity was also related to affective outcomes, such as job satisfaction, self-confidence and motivation. According to CP researchers, teacher development within CP was more than just professional development in and of itself – it involved fundamental changes in the institution and the individual teachers within it.

How teacher development was produced

There were seven key processes through which CP contributed to teacher development:

- CP gave teachers resources for learning new skills, ideas, techniques and contacts.
- CP motivated teachers to adopt the creative approaches through giving them – and not just their students - real experiences of creative approaches in action.
- CP provided new teaching and learning opportunities, created new practices and encouraged teachers to explore new ideas.
- CP provided time and space for teachers to explore creativity and to plan its integration into their pedagogical approach
- In providing and/or supporting CPD, CP was able to build teachers' creative pedagogical repertoires

- CP urged changes to the school ethos by creating a focus on sharing resources and ideas, and embedding a positive disposition towards creativity in teaching and learning.
- CP encouraged and enabled whole school activities, allowing staff to collaborate and share.

There is some research focused specifically on teacher learning (e.g. Galton, 2010). It seems that there were three 'types' of teacher learning – (1) when teachers took the skills on offer from the artists and were then able to use them themselves in much the same way; (2) when teachers took the skills on offer and were able to transfer them to other similar topics and (3) when teachers were able to understand the pedagogic principles on offer and use these as the basis for developing new practice. This latter possibility (3) was much less common than the other two types of teacher learning. One programme which did 'transform' teachers was the RSC Learning Performance Network where key teachers were engaged in a long-term programme which supported both practice and academic development (Neelands, 2009; Thomson, Hall, Jones, & Franks, 2010).

Across the research more generally what seemed to be significant were the long term trusting and mutually rewarding relationships that creative agents and artists established with teachers and school leaders. Teachers 'bought into' the programme because CP was 'on their side' and was not there to judge and evaluate. Many teachers re-found their sense of professionalism and valued the opportunity to participate in professional learning communities within and beyond their schools. Teachers enjoyed the challenge of horizon broadening, and time to explore and take risks in their own practice. The change framework that CP used and its personalized pacing of change allowed teachers to learn what they needed and wanted with a strong sense of ownership.

Teacher learning was however also very dependent on the overall processes of school change and leadership practice (Thomson et al., 2009). Across the programme, there was a great deal of variety in teacher learning opportunities. This difference was of concern to CP and the programme was reorganized in the mid 2000s into three tiers of school involvement, with National Schools of Creativity being 'lighthouse' examples of change and teacher/student learning.

C. Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a broad term, used loosely and in multiple ways, incorporating the physical and social aspect of life as well as culturally loaded notions such as 'happiness' (Nevill & Ni Ogain, 2009). Some CP researchers were either working with, or discussed the merits and/ or faults of definitions of wellbeing already in use (for instance the Department of Health's definition, the Every Child Matters definition or Unicef's report card). These discussions generally highlighted the importance of development of the self, positive affect and relationships, prosperity and general good health.

Researchers who specifically investigated wellbeing (e.g. McLellan et al., 2012) worked with dual foci; (1) “objective” wellbeing determined by observable and measurable economic and material factors such as crime and epidemiological indicators; and (2) a broader category of “subjective” wellbeing, less tangible (but nevertheless important) aspects of wellbeing such as spirituality, feeling happy or feeling connected to people. Researchers generated subcategories for subjective wellbeing including: cognitive, personal, social, physical and emotional development; active and playful learning; broadened horizons; communication; creative development; and motivation.

Wellbeing was attributed to project-based processes related to CP specific activities, and school based processes which impacted on teaching and learning.

Project based processes:

- CP broadened the horizons of students by providing access to new experiences and opportunities
- The projects created a “buzz” by providing enjoyable experiences tapping into students’ innate curiosity and creativity.
- The projects produced tangible outputs which could be displayed publicly.

Pedagogical processes:

- CP introduced or supported a shift to a more “creative pedagogy” which afforded choice, focused on creative development, was multisensory and improved the quality of relationships.
- CP often took a whole school approach, initiating a community of learning and nurturing a caring, sharing ethos.
- CP support for staff afforded improvements to their wellbeing while developing aspects of their pedagogical repertoires which focused on the wellbeing of students
- CP facilitated or encouraged partnerships with outsiders to meet particular needs (for example, speech and language therapy, recreation and leisure activities).

Researchers argued that CP offered a particularly appealing practice which was not only artistic but also ‘other’ to everyday school; the offer was of high quality, and operated with high levels of acceptance, nurture, care and inclusion as the norm. CP’s open-ness to suggestion, criticisms and new directions was integral to the ways in which school structures and practices – group work, self managed and flexible paced projects, a pleasing working environment, a whole curriculum approach – were addressed. CP not only created tangible outputs which were a cause for celebration of effort and achievement, but which were also the basis for memorable experiences.

Wellbeing was strongly connected to school ethos and research that focused on ethos emphasised the structural and organizational cultural components necessary for wellbeing (Bragg & Manchester, 2011).

D. Work related and vocational learning

CP saw as an important outcome the creation of 21st century work related habits and practices. Researchers, like CP itself, often referred to young people building an understanding of 'the world of work' and developing the attributes of creative people, i.e. collaboration with others, generation of new ideas, improvisation and risk taking. Some students were also expected to develop talents appropriate to vocations in the creative industries. There was thus in many of the research projects a focus on the acquisition of 'hard' and 'soft' skills. The 'hard skills' included a range of creative practice - not just in the arts but also engineering, architecture, design - and 'craft' making practices. Many researchers also generated evidence related to generic and transferable skills such as literacy and numeracy, communication, teamwork, ingenuity and entrepreneurialism.

The research shows that CP supported both 'internal' processes - those which were based within and centred on the school and its activities, and 'external' processes, those that involved outside agencies from industry and government.

Internal processes;

- CP itself offered events, opportunities and training outside of school.
- CP supported changes in school ethos to encourage 'outward facing-ness'.
- They supported activities designed to equip learners to collaborate and co construct, mentor each other, and become entrepreneurial.
- CP strongly encouraged the involvement of young people in decisions, discussions and organization.
- CP championed and modeled constructivist learning, dialogue and 'learning by doing'

External processes

- CP connected young people with creative industries to give real world experiences through apprenticeships, mentoring and networking.
- CP encouraged schools to develop creative approaches to work- related and vocational learning.

CP brought artists and creative practitioners with real world work experience into schools and this benefited not only the students, but also the staff. Researchers highlighted the effects of this to work-related individual development. The research contains ample evidence of the ways in which creative learning supported young people to be adaptable and flexible, to innovate and transfer what they had learnt to new situations, and to learn how to learn. Cultural experiences funded by CP broadened young people's horizons and their sense of possibilities.

CP advocated an 'all through' vocational and work related creative approach which started in the early years and was maintained throughout the entire school experience.

The legacy research project on levels of creative learning (Spencer et al., 2012) embeds the notion of 'progress' for a cluster of work-related creative learning outcomes.

E. Youth voice

CP saw as one of its goals the education of 'a reflective individual and engaged citizen'. It required schools to engage 'youth voice' as an integral component for both. Researchers saw this as a somewhat slippery notion.

We use the term 'youth voice' as an umbrella term for a diverse range of work with and by young people, variously also referred to as pupil, student or learner voice, youth consultation, participation, involvement, engagement, empowerment, and so on (Bragg, Manchester, & Faulkner, 2009, p. 7)

Across the research texts, youth 'voice' was considered: (1) literally, through speaking and being spoken to, and/or (2) symbolically, through students having their opinions and interests taken into account and generally being involved in projects.

Researchers used and referred to CP having normative criteria for voice;

- In order for students to have voice, they need to be equipped with the skills, understandings and confidence to 'have their say'.
- In order to be reflective, students needed the capacity to understand their own position or opinion, to consider it in light of the position and opinions of others and have the skills and confidence to be able to voice these positions and opinions.
- Young people were also to be aware of global and local cultural issues, to understand them and also actively participate in communities in order for their advancement and development.

These practices were seen as citizenship and equated to youth voice, as well as the 'reflective individual' and 'engaged citizen'.

Researchers produced evidence that CP contributed to empowerment, understanding of one's own identity, the ability to collaborate and the development of skills and personal attributes; these were considered aspects of a reflective individual. CP also facilitated taking action, having an awareness and understanding of global issues, understanding one's own beliefs and accepting and using broad democratic social norms; these were integral to being and becoming an engaged citizen.

Within the literature there were significantly more references to CP processes which could be thought of as contributing to the production of a reflective individual than of an engaged citizen. These were:

- Adult facilitation of youth voice, ranging from creating opportunities for participation to modeling and structuring interactions.

- Demands for collaboration and involvement of students in governance of the school, in designing and managing projects and in teaching and learning issues and planning.
- Development and use of different forms and media for expression and communication
- Changes to school ethos and structure to develop and nurture relationships and enable participation
- Student self-expression via new and extended opportunities to communicate ideas and opinions as well as the development of “creative student councils”.

Processes related to the production of an engaged citizen were:

- Producing tangible outputs to exploit the communicative potential of the arts e.g. film
- Broadening students’ outlook/horizons by introducing a diversity of views and experiences as well as enabling engagement in controversial issues.
- Facilitating or encouraging community links, enabling action in projects of benefit to the community, and having positive interactions with community members.

CP’s unequivocal advocacy of young people’s views and opinions was one of its more confronting aspects yet, according to researchers, was highly valued by teachers and schools. CP supported staff to engage in what were sometimes challenging conversation and urged them to take students’ views into account in any reform they undertook. CP commissioned research shows that students were highly encouraged by opportunities to give an opinion, design and manage activities and to become involved in ongoing governance. They welcomed adult support.

CP saw youth voice as integral to education for citizenship and in particular encouraged the centrality of dialogue and recognition of diverse identities and cultural practices. There was tangible support for respectful and responsive peer-to-peer communication. The research corpus offers case studies of students reflecting on and critiquing ideas, engaging with controversial issues and undertaking outreach work in the community.

However, researchers were sometimes concerned that: (1) consultations asked questions about how learning should take place, rather than also about what knowledges were important, (2) children involved in decision-making processes tended to be those most well socialized into the ways of the school, and (3) that student actions rarely strayed outside of educational contexts into broader social, economic and political questions (e.g. Bragg et al., 2009; Thomson et al., 2009). The links with citizenship were thus highly framed by the concerns of the overall programme.

Programmatic lessons from CP research

If CP could be said to have achieved impact and ‘cultural value’ there were also some things that it might have done to accomplish even more.

Researchers made some constructive critiques of the CP offer. More could have been achieved, they suggested, if CP had:

- directly addressed poverty and pedagogy, thus connecting with the body of research about 'turnaround' practices. This might also have led to a sharper focus on evaluating the value of more 'compensatory' mainstream cultural experiences such as going to the theatre, museums etc.
- connected contemporary reforms with the histories of curriculum change, particularly in regard to project based and cross-curriculum learning and middle schooling
- focused more strongly on assessment practices to assist teachers to document students' learning
- directed regions to work more consistently with local higher education providers to update teachers' discipline-specific pedagogical knowledge
- worked with the National College to spread understandings of the commitments and organisational practices of specifically 'instructional' school leaders.

Creative partnerships and research

Our objective in this archive study was not simply to look at what research might say to questions of cultural value, but also to document and comment on the kind of research that was commissioned and undertaken. Our final section takes up this question, focusing on three issues: (1) the type and purpose of research commissioned by CP, (2) circularity in the research and (4) lessons for future research on arts and education.

Type and purpose of research

CP was notable among international reform programmes for its serious engagement with research and researchers. There are, to our knowledge, very few school reform programmes that dedicated so much senior staff time and substantive budget to research and evaluation. One of CP's founding aims was the provision of "rigorous evidence" (Sharp et al., 2006, p. 4).

A significant affordance of the CCE archive is thus its documentation of a process of thinking about what rigorous evidence should be in relation to a cultural and educational initiative. The foreword to the research digest CP's first summary publication, significantly titled *This Much We Know* (Creative Partnerships, 2007), describes research as, inter alia:

- to reflect on process with [...] the aim of changing and improving delivery
- to describe and analyse impact, both in terms of quality and quantity
- as illustrative and advocacy material

These three approaches to the production of evidence - heuristic, impact orientated and rhetorical - appear throughout the texts in the archive.

Heuristics. The archive contains a body of qualitative academic research aiming to build the conceptual and practical repertoires of those involved in CP, with "identifying

and labeling activities to facilitate discussion about features of school practice” (Thomson et al., 2009, p. 4). “Heuristics” were to draw out “a vocabulary and categories of activities which might be mobilised in professional development and diagnostic support of schools”(p. 5). The archive also contains national audits of CP's local self-evaluation practice, in which everyone involved was encouraged to reflect on their practice - to define their evaluation aims and develop its instruments, to collect, analyse and report data, and then to take corrective action. The “rigour and integrity” of this process was seen to lie in “deep conversations and the clarity of enquiry questions” (Wood et al., 2007, pp. 7-8).

Demonstrating impact. A great deal of independent research, commissioned to document CP's impact according to pre-determined inspection-standards related criteria, is collected in the archive. One body of work aims, through survey research or the analysis of attendance and key stage exam data, to evaluate CP's impact on academic attainment and attendance (e.g. Cooper et al., 2011). A slightly more open body of research uses survey research to document CP's positive impact on young people, parents, teachers, creative providers, schools and the economy (e.g. BOP Consulting, 2006; Lamont et al., 2010; Mackey & Ullman, 2006). This approach to evidence dominates CP's initial summary documents which focus on questions such as “Does it work?” (Creative Partnerships, 2007, p. 3) and what is “the Creative Partnerships effect”(Creative Partnerships, 2009, p. 11).

The theoretical realm. Literature reviews and theoretical analysis make up the third body of CP research accessible through the archive. This research was interested in “rhetoric”, in discourse “organised to persuade, as a form of ‘communicative action’”(Banaji, Burn, & Buckingham, 2010, p. 11). This set of texts aimed both to expose what is at stake in discourse, its “assumptions and aspirations” (O'Connor, 2010, p. 7) and to develop its own terminology (Sefton-Green et al., 2008). This abstract level work was not only a parallel to more empirical research. Theoretical development took on a meta-role in theorising what should constitute evidence for CP. It is necessary, as one “think piece” puts it, to find ways “to weave together evidence which can accurately describe the full range of effects of the programme”, a task which requires “new kinds of theory”(Sefton-Green, in Creative Partnerships, 2007, p. 8).

The archive shows that, over time, CP's understanding of how evidence and impact should be understood moved away from simple demonstrations of effects. One of CP's final research reports, aiming to develop a framework for assessing the development of creativity, for example, did so through “field trials” and was oriented to helping teachers and pupils improve their practice (Spencer et al., 2012). CP's final summary document argues that evidence is about “understanding how and why the Creative Partnerships approach is effective” (Creative Partnerships, 2012, p. 13). This task, it argues, requires the description-of and reflection-on practice, attendance to impact and thought at a theoretical level, all working together. CP research, taken as a body, the text suggests, has “provided a theoretical framework which is able to predict the likely impacts of the

programme, and these impacts have been confirmed through detailed classroom observation”(p. 21). This is a final definition of evidence which privileges an orientation to impact yet which argues that impact is shown through the interaction of theoretical development and in depth research.

It is not surprising given these three aims that CP commissioned research using a range of different methods. These included in depth case study research, mixed methods, surveys, mixed methods studies, economic modeling, and longitudinal secondary data analysis of school performance. Mixed methods research was generally the norm for impact related studies, while that designed to produce theory and heuristics was more often in depth case study and ethnographic. This alignment of research methods with research purposes may well have something to offer cultural value research more generally.

Overlaps

Our analysis revealed an issue in the foci of much of the CP commissioned research. What some studies suggested as a ‘causal’ process leading to a particular outcome, other studies claimed as an outcome. So for example student leadership was said to contribute to well-being; but a sense of safety and security (some of the characteristics of subjective well being) was also said to contribute to student leadership. Teacher professional development was said to be necessary for students to have a say, but students having a say also added to teachers’ professional development.

The interlocking nature of these research findings suggests that we are looking at something much more like an ecological process of change in which it is almost impossible to separate out one set of processes and outcomes from another (see Appendix Three for a table which shows these interconnections). And indeed, this was the view taken by a number of schools. In the few school evaluations that we have been able to look at, the schools claimed multiple benefits from the same project. Creative ‘signature pedagogies’ produced multiple benefits, which included teacher learning, school culture change, new organizational practices and changed student behaviours (Thomson et al., 2009).

Lessons for research on value and impact

In retrospect, we can note that the potential for focusing on the arts rather than creativity was not realised. Because CP’s emphasis was always on creativity, specific arts learning outcomes were rarely foregrounded. This means, we suspect, that many of the benefits of the programme have not been recorded. These might include:

- more understanding of, enthusiasm for, and participation in arts activities in everyday life
- enhanced access of ‘non traditional’ arts groups to institutions and practices i.e. greater cultural capital spread more evenly around the youth population

- enhanced take-up of further education and training in the creative industries.

There could still be research of current 'creative industry' students in FE and HE to ascertain whether any, or how many of them, had some engagement with CP and what impact it had on them. This could be part of a more general large-scale research study into pathways into the creative industries – research that is urgently needed if we are to better understand this trajectory.

In hindsight it seems clear that CP – and the wider community of interest - might have benefited from a longitudinal study of students and teachers which tracked them over time through their involvement with the programme. But it is certainly the case that there would have been some young people who experienced CP interventions throughout the length of the programme, in both their primary and secondary schools, and we might have learnt more about the 'impact' of the programme through this kind of research. We might have seen, as noted above, whether/how CP contributed to increased retention into the senior years and/or different choices about future education and training. NFER did attempt something like this at the beginning of their impact research, but their method relied on schools collecting information which became impossible to maintain. Similarly, it would have been helpful to have a longitudinal study of teachers to see how CP changed their repertoires of practice over time, or not.

CP is not alone in not establishing this kind of longitudinal study; the vast majority of research associated with educational reform programmes uses the school as the unit of analysis, combined with aggregates of existing test and exam results, self report surveys and some case study work. A notable exception is the A+ arts reform programme which set up a tracking framework which included state testing, but went far beyond this as the key measure of effect (Adkins & Gunzenhauser, 2005; Noblit, Dickson, Wilson, & McKinney, 2009).

However, the CP archive does affirm considerable gains a range of areas that are not directly related to performance in standardised tests. Arguably much of what is measured in exams is not comprehensive and thus, a final point that might be learnt from the programme is that more work on aggregating research findings could have been beneficial – and may still be so.

APPENDICES

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